# The True Object of Life

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# THE TRUE OBJECT OF LIFE

BY

GEORGE FREDERICK JELFS

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# THE TRUE OBJECT OF LIFE

## FIRST PART

## THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

"Supreme, all-wise, eternal Potentate!
Sole Author, Sole Dispenser of our fate,
Enthroned in light and immortality,
Whom no man fully sees, and none can see!
Original of beings! Power divine!
Since that I live, and that I think, is Thine!
Benign Creator! let Thy plastic hand
Dispose its own effect; let Thy command
Restore, Great Father, Thy instructed son,
And in my act may Thy great will be done."

[MATTHEW PRIOR.]

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# PREFATORY EPISTLE

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.
December, 1905.

My Dear Father :

This is the book of which you received an intimation during my visit home last year. Since then most of my leisure hours have been employed in a hasty endeavor to complete the work, that you might have an early opportunity of reading it.

You will find in the foot-note to Chapter VII. of "Science and Religion," which treats the world as an Institution, that your esteemed author, George Combe, expressed the belief that had Bishop Butler and the authors respectively of the "Bridgewater Treatises" and "Typical Forms and Special Ends of Creation" not been influenced and restrained by religious dogmas, their works would have unfolded greater and more certain truths with far more practical and profitable results.

The names of several other authors might be added to this list, but I would specially include that of Lord Bacon, as one apparently under a similar religious restraint, because, in his famous work, "Novum Organum," so closely in touch with Combe's progressive philosophy whilst denouncing religious opposition to Science, he gives as a reason for not "propounding a more universal or complete theory, that the time does not seem yet to have arrived for so doing," although he admits that "here and there, and on certain special subjects, we are in possession of far truer, and as we think more cer-

tain, and even more profitable, results than are as yet attained."

Now, I propose giving the result of my investigations along the lines already laid down by these and other distinguished authors, in the hope of having propounded a more universal and complete philosophy, and one likely to have greater practical and profitable results than have hitherto been reached.

In this bold attempt, as I cannot claim any literary merit for the work, I have been encouraged to proceed, owing to the belief that the conclusions reached by me would long ago have been established by these and other authorities, including George Combe, had they perceived that righteousness and religion, as originally instituted, although they have grown to form a kind of relationship, have no foundation in common, either as to their meaning or object, but in fact lead to different and opposite results. That with a better understanding as to what righteousness and religion respectively stands for, both would be regarded as the means to an end. That a similar conclusion would be reached as to the Scriptures, and then the way would be opened up and cleared for understanding the grand and central truth, which it is the main object of this work to establish, namely, the chief purpose for which man was endowed with life and faculties, as declared in the Scriptures, and that righteousness, or all that can be reached through "pure and undefiled" religion, are but the means to that end.

In forming these conclusions I have been particularly impressed not only with the confirmatory evidence to be found in the sayings of great and godly men of biblical fame, to whom the term "religion" was apparently unknown, but with the absence of any Scriptural authority per contra.

I have also found great encouragement in the task I have undertaken, because I have been able to arrive at my conclusions without expressing a thought which any critic can

claim as being impious, or derogative of the power, greatness or glory of God, or that will have any effect other than to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind, and bring men into closer touch and communion with their Maker.

Nor have I reached any conclusion without finding in a remarkable way that the minds of other men, superior in intellectual power, have been directed along the same paths which I have followed, and I have quoted liberally from these greater minds that the reader may feel that he is not being influenced by opinions unsupported by higher authority.

Lastly, "if my exposition of the Divine government be true, it is a noble vocation to proclaim it to the world for the knowledge of it must be fraught with blessings and enjoyment to man. And if these sentiments be appreciated, let us advance and fear not—encouraged by the assurance that if this doctrine be of man, it will come to naught, but that if it be of God no human authority can prevail against it."

Your loving son,

GEORGE FREDERICK JELFS.

To Mr. Samuel Jelfs,
Sherborne, Dorset,
England.

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# THE TRUE OBJECT OF LIFE

FIRST PART

## THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

### CHAPTER I.

THE MISUSE AND ABUSE OF WORDS.

*Serious consequences attending, with special reference to the word Religion, and Bishop Butler's Analogy.*

"Accustom yourself to reflect on the words you use, hear or read; their birth, derivation and history."—Coleridge.

It is stated by the biographer of Dr. Chalmers that that eminent divine and Dr. Stuart met one day in Edinburgh and engaged in a long and eager conversation on saving grace. Street after street was passed, and argument after argument was vigorously plied. At last, his time or his patience exhausted, Chalmers broke off the interview; but, as at parting he shook his opponent's hand he said: "If you wish to see my views stated clearly and distinctly read a tract called 'Hindrances to believing the gospel.'" "Why," exclaimed Stuart, "that is the very tract I published myself."

A record of the many serious consequences and of the humorous effect occasioned by the accidental misuse and by the abuse of words, through carelessness and ignorance, would fill volumes. It is, however, because of the

many and very serious consequences occasioned by the misuse through carelessness of the word *religion,* that this subject forms the introductory chapter of this work.

"Let no one underrate the importance of the study of words. No word can be truly defined until the exact idea is understood in all its relations which the word is designed to represent. The shelves of our public libraries groan under the weight of huge folios and quartos once hurled at each other by the giants of divinity which never would have been published but for their confused notions, or failure to discriminate the meaning of certain technical and oft recurring terms. Max Muller sensibly observes that people will fight and call each other very hard names for denying or asserting certain opinions about the supernatural, who would consider it impertinent if they were asked to define what they mean by the supernatural, and who have never even perceived the meaning of nature.

It has been remarked by Archbishop Whately that the words whose ambiguity is the most frequently overlooked, and produces the greatest amount of confusion of thought and fallacy, are the commonest, the very ones whose meaning is supposed to be best understood."

"Familiar acquaintance is perpetually mistaken for accurate knowledge."—Matthews.

"Definition of words has been commonly called a mere exercise of grammarians, but when we come to consider the innumerable murders, proscriptions, massacres and tortures which men have inflicted on each other from mistaking the meaning of words, the exercise of definition certainly begins to assume a more dignified aspect."—S. Smith.

"Words, as a Tartan's bow, do shoot back upon the

understanding and pervert the judgment; so it is almost necessary in all controversies and disputations to imitate the wisdom of the mathematics in setting down in the very beginning the definitions of our very words and terms that others may know how we accept and understand them and whether they concur with us or no."—Lord Bacon.

"There remains yet another more general, though perhaps less observed abuse of words, and that is, that men having by a long and familiar use annexed to them certain ideas, they are apt to imagine so near and necessary a connection between the names and the signification they use them in, that they forwardly suppose one cannot but understand what their meaning is, and therefore one ought to acquiesce in the words delivered. Knowledge and reasoning require precise determinate ideas. This abuse of taking words upon trust has nowhere spread so far, nor with so ill effects, as amongst men of letters. The multiplication and obstinacy of disputes, which have so laid waste the intellectual world, is owing to nothing more than this ill use of words."—Locke.

With these observations fresh on the mind, let us consider if there is any reason for believing them in some measure to be true as regards the use of the word "religion" by Bishop Butler in his well known work entitled "An analogy of religion to the constitution and course of nature." Butler was a man of great intellectual power, and his Analogy contains many progressive thoughts and ideas concerning Divine government, the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the capabilities of man towards moral perfection, that we are able to quote as authority in support of our own conclusions. For this reason, however, his work has never been satisfactory to

the church, whose religion he undertook to defend. On the other hand, owing to his adherence to the orthodoxy of his church, due probably to his position, and his theological training, or, what the poet Moore calls "the dust of the schools," it has not been satisfactory to those who can find scattered here and there throughout the work many ideas and principles that form the basis of a truer and far more satisfactory philosophy than he was able to establish.

He treats religion as being supernatural. The scriptures as the only source for proving this, and of which, by virtue of his calling, he should have had superior knowledge (having, it is said, read them a thousand times over), he admits that he does not fully understand, nevertheless he undertakes to trace an analogy of religion to something which, by implication, he leads you to think he does understand, but of which, by his own confession, his knowledge is very imperfect. Here are his words:

"And as it is owned that the whole scheme of Scripture is not yet understood, so, if it ever comes to be understood before the revelation of all things, Acts iii. 21, and without miraculous interposition, it must be in the same way as natural knowledge is come at, by the continuance and progress of learning and of liberty, and by particular persons attending to, comparing and pursuing intimations scattered up and down it, which are overlooked and disregarded by the generality of the world. Nor is it at all incredible that a book which has been so long in the possession of mankind should contain many truths us yet undiscovered. For all the same phenomena and the same faculties of investigation from which such great discoveries in natural knowledge have been made in the present and last age, were equally in the possession

of mankind several thousand years before. And possibly it might be intended that events, as they come to pass, should open and ascertain the meaning of several parts of Scripture. Christianity is a scheme quite beyond our comprehension. The scripture expressly asserts it to be so. And, indeed, one cannot read a passage relating to this great mystery of godliness (I. Timothy iii. 16) but what immediately runs up into something which shows us our ignorance in it, as everything in nature shows us our ignorance in the constitution of nature. And whoever will seriously consider that part of the Christian scheme which is revealed in scripture will find so much more unrevealed as will convince him that, to all the purposes of judging and objecting, we know as little of it as of the constitution of nature."

Now this is an extraordinary admission to make when you consider it in connection with the title and object of the author's work, from which it is taken. He must certainly have encountered unforeseen obstacles to his original line of thought. Was it, think you, by reason of his ignorance of natural laws that God's works seemed to him to be imperfect, or, was it because he found nothing in nature that harmonized with religion as he understood it? If Butler failed in understanding the whole scheme of the scriptures, and the true interpretation thereof, was it because God's word was intended to baffle man's understanding, or, because the scheme and the truths of the scriptures apparently conflicted with religion as he understood it? If Butler failed in understanding the true scheme of Christianity, was it because its very simplicity created doubt, or, was it because he could not reconcile religion, as he understood it, with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ? These questions are weighty, but also

pertinent, in view of the fact that Butler, in his Analogy, does not first establish what religion is. He offers no evidence that it is supernatural or of divine origin, and leaves you in ignorance as to what he himself understood the origin and true meaning of the word to be. They can be satisfactorily answered only by showing that Butler, in common with many other learned men, owing to a long and familiar use of the word religion, made a mistake in annexing to it certain ideas which its birth, derivation, history and definition do not justify. It will certainly explain the cause of Butler's perplexity, if it can be shown that religion is not supernatural or of divine origin, nor even sanctioned by scriptural authority, as he assumed it to be.

God instructed men in two ways only, by "The Book," containing His revealed word, and by the Book of Nature. But in no one of the books of the Old Testament, unless the book of Maccabees be included, does the word religion appear, nor is it mentioned more than four times in the New. It is not mentioned in the four gospels recording the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. When Antiochus had smitten Egypt, and taken possession of Jerusalem, he persuaded the Israelites to give up their laws and follow the strange laws of the land, and "many of the Israelites consented to his religion and sacrificed unto idols and profaned the Sabbath," I. Maccabees i. (and see I. Maccabees ii. 19-22). In II. Maccabees vi. 24, Eleazar disclaims having "gone to a strange religion." In Acts xxvi. 5, Paul declares that he was known to have lived a Pharisee, after the most strictest sect of "our" (*i. e.*, the Pharisee's) religion. And in his epistle to the Galatians i. 13, 14 and 23, he admits having, on behalf of the Jews' religion, persecuted the church of God beyond measure.

It is the Apostle James, however, who, understanding the teaching of Jesus, and being in all probability familiar with the word "religion," gives the only scriptural interpretation of it in these words :

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—James i, 26-27.

It would therefore appear that if there were anything in the religion of Antiochus or of Paul, or in any other or "strange" religion, not before God and the Father, pure and undefiled, it must have been some act of profession or mere outward appearance of godliness, in its nature and origin distinctively human.

That Butler misused the word religion we leave our readers to judge, when we ourselves have more fully considered the origin and true meaning of it, an effort reserved for another chapter. In the meantime something will have been gained, if sufficient has been stated to impress on the mind the importance of knowing that learned men have erred not only in the selection but also in the true meaning of words used; that the improper use and abuse of words have been fraught with the most serious consequences; that words, of which scholars and intellectual men are most familiar are by them often misused; that if Butler erred it was in all probability owing to his familiar acquaintance and the supposition that its meaning was well understood, that he never took the trouble to explain his own or understand what others conceived to be the meaning of the word religion; and that

if he used the word under a mistake as to its true meaning through carelessness, it is reasonable to suppose many others have done likewise.

"Can we shut our eyes to the fact that the religious opinions of mankind are in a state of flux? And when we regard the uncertainty of current beliefs, the war of creeds, the havoc of inevitable as well as of idle doubt, the reluctant abandonment of early faith by those who would cherish it longer if they could, is it not plain that the one thing thinking men are waiting for is the introduction of law among the phenomena of the spiritual world? When that comes we shall offer to such men a truly scientific theology, and the reign of law will transform the whole spiritual world as it has already transformed the natural world." So wrote Henry Drummond in his book entitled "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and we cannot help thinking how near we were to realizing a "scientific theology" had this eminent author but undertaken to show the distinction, if there is any, between the natural and the spiritual world.

> "All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
> Whose body nature is, and God the soul.
> All nature is but art unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction which thou canst not see.
> This light and darkness in our chaos joined,
> What shall divide? The God within the mind."
>
> [Pope]

## CHAPTER II.

### RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*Instruction in, the object of the Scriptures—Comparison of with Religion.*

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"The word righteousness is the masterword of the Old Testament."—M. Arnold.

Before pursuing the enquiry as to what religion really is, it seems advisable to consider what righteousness means, because there is good reason for believing that to a large extent the former word has usurped the place of the latter. At any rate, it appears to be commonly understood that what the word righteousness stands for is included in what is meant by the word religion, but this is a mistake, as will hereafter appear.

Righteousness is the regulation of all human actions in accordance with divine law and the dictates of conscience, as the voice of God; not through fear, nor with the object of rendering a direct service to God, but with an unselfish love and sincere desire of the heart, to offend neither God nor man in thought, word or deed; to cause no man to be injured in his person or property; to promote the happiness and improve the condition of mankind, and with all, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

Philemon, a Greek author, who died B. C. 262, left behind him a definition which perhaps comes nearest to what we can conceive to be a truly upright and just man, and who knows how often Jesus Christ pondered over

these very words? "The just man is not he who does no man an injury, but he who, being able to inflict it, does not wish to do so, nor yet is it the man who has abstained from seizing petty gains, but who determines not to lay hold of great possessions when he might do so, and might hold them with impunity, nor is it the man who observes all these things, but who, endued with a noble and ingenuous disposition, wishes to be just, and not merely to seem so." The word righteousness is first brought to our notice in the Bible, and there stamped as of divine origin, where it is said that God, in order to destroy the wicked, deluged the earth, but spared Noah and his house "because of his (Noah's) righteousness" (Gen. vii. 1). Nor would God destroy the righteous with the wicked in Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xviii. 26). He ordered the judges "in matters of controversy between men to justify the righteous and condemn the wicked" (Deut. xxv. 1). "For God knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Ps. i. 6). "He loveth righteousness and his countenance doth behold the upright" (Ps. xi. 7). Of the righteous it is written: "They shall flourish like a palm tree (Ps. xcii. 12); be in everlasting remembrance (Ps. cxii. 6), and be recompensed in the earth (Prov. xi. 31). They are bold as a lion (Prov. xxviii. 1) and sin not (Ez. iii. 21); He hath hope in his death (Prov. xiv. 37); and regardeth the life of his beast (Prov. xii. 11); There is a reward for (Ps. lviii. 2); Light in sorrow for (Ps. 97, 11); God's secret is with (Prov. iii. 32); The souls of will not perish (Prov. x. 3; The labor of tendeth to life (Prov. x. 16); The lips of feed many and know what is acceptable (Prov. x. 21-23); The desire of is only good (Prov. xi. 28); The fruit of is the tree of life (Prov. xi. 30); The

way of is made plain (Prov. xv. 19); God heareth the prayer of (Prov. xv. 29), and see James v. 16.

"Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Mal. iii. 18). Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). "He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward" (Matt. x. 41). "The righteous shall go into life eternal" (Matt. xxv. 46). It is said "that Zacharias and his wife were both righteous before God, walking in all his commandments blameless" (Luke i. 6). St. Peter said, "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts x. 35). St. John said, "If ye know that Christ is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (I. John ii. 29).

The foregoing are only a few selected passages out of very many in the scriptures where the words "righteous" and "righteousness" appear. They have always, however, the same comprehensive meaning, that of distinguishing the good from the bad, the just from the unjust, the men whose actions and conduct are most pleasing to God from those who do evil and work iniquity; and they offer a strong presumptive evidence, especially in view of the fact that nowhere in the scriptures is it said that a man should have religion or be religious, that if any of the books of the Bible were inspired and preserved for any particular purpose, that purpose was to make men righteous.

What is most significant as a matter for contemplation here is, we have it from the mouth of Jesus himself, that when He shall come in His glory to judge all the nations

of the earth, He will request those blessed of His Father whom He has placed on His right hand, "to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world," because of their "righteousness, in feeding the hungry; in giving drink to the thirsty; in caring for the stranger; in clothing the naked, and in visiting the sick and those in prison. And those who have not done those things shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. xxv).

"You will notice that he does not catechise them as to what they believed. Not one single syllable of belief in any doctrine whatsoever. Nothing about foreordination; nothing about the Bible; nothing about the Trinity; nothing about his own character or authority. Simply as to whether they have been good. Good, that is all! Have they helped, have they tried to lessen the sum of human misery? Have they cared for their fellow-men? Not a word about ceremony, about membership in a church; not a word about any priesthood; not one single thing that all the churches to-day are declaring to be absolutely essential to Christian character and Christian life—not one word about any of them! Those who have tried to be good and help their fellow-men are the ones before whose feet the door of eternal felicity opens with welcome. And the others are condemned, not for lack of belief, but simply for lack of character and conduct, nothing else."—Dr. M. J. Savage.

It is manifest then that righteousness is the proper word to express what God and Christ required of men towards men, not only from the beginning, but for all time. The word nowhere conveys any idea of religion, except in so far as that word can be construed to include in its meaning the doing of those things which will benefit man-

kind. Nor does the word righteousness anywhere express the idea that it includes the doing of anything only as a service for God's benefit, or to please Him.

"No life is pleasing to God but that which is useful to mankind. Virtue is not rest, but action. If thou doest good to man as an evidence of thy love to God, thy virtue will be exalted from mortal to divine, and that happiness, which is the pledge of paradise, will be thy reward upon earth." This quotation from an Eastern narrative, is unsurpassed by any didactical passage contained in the Scriptures.

Of Job it is written that there was not one on the earth so perfect and upright, because he "delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. He caused the widow's heart to leap with joy. He was eyes to the blind, and feet was he to the lame. He was a father to the poor, and took the trouble to search out the cause which he knew not. He broke the jaws of the wicked and plucked the spoil out of his teeth. He wept for him that was in trouble, and his soul was grieved for the poor. He made not gold his hope or fine gold his confidence. He rejoiced not at the destruction of his enemies, nor raised his voice against one when evil found him. He did not let the stranger lodge in the street, but opened his door to the traveller." See also Ezekiel, Chapter xviii.

"To do something, however small, to make others happier and better, is the highest ambition, the most elevating hope, which can inspire a human being."—Lord Avebury.

> "Self-love thus pushed to social, to divine,
> Gives thee to make thy neighbor's blessing thine.
> Is this too little for the boundless heart?

Extend it, let thy enemies have part:
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life and sense
In one close system of benevolence:
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss but height of charity.
God loves from whole to parts; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race;
Wide and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in, of every kind;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heaven beholds its image in his breast."

[POPE.]

## CHAPTER III.

### WHAT IS RELIGION ?

*Its human origin—Definition of—Selfishness the basic principle—Opposed to Righteousness—Christ's Religion.*

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" By religion I do not mean the church-creed which a man professes, the articles of faith which he will sign, and, in words or otherwise assert, not this wholly, in many cases not this at all. We see men of all kinds of professed creeds attain to almost all degrees of worth or worthlessness under each and any of them. This is not what I call religion, this profession and assertion which is often only a profession and assertion from the outworks of the man, from the mere argumentative region of him, if even so deep as that. But the thing a man does practically believe (and this is often enough without asserting it to himself, much less to others), the thing a man does practically lay to heart and know for certain concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe, and his duty and destiny here, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his religion, or it may be his mere scepticism and no religion; the manner it is in which he feels himself to be spiritually related to the unseen world or no world ; and I say, if you tell me what that is you tell me to a very great extent what the man is, what the kind of things he will do is."—Thomas Carlyle.

Perhaps there is no word in the English language so familiar to every one and so generally used with a meaning so diversified as the word *religion.* This statement

can easily be verified by any who will ask others to define it. Therefore the use of the word must have caused much confusion of thought, fallacious reasoning, and needless disputations.

Custom and length of usage may have enlarged the meaning by annexing new ideas that originally were never thought of. But this grafting on of new ideas cannot deprive a word of its original meaning any more than arboreal grafting will change the fruit of the parent stem, or destroy the nature of the tree from which the graft is taken.

Benjamin Kidd, in his work, "Social Evolution," thinks that the curiosity of a visitor from another planet, seeking information on this subject, would be interesting. "If at the outset he endeavors to discover what all these various forms of religion admittedly had in common, that is to say, the distinguishing characteristic they all possessed, from the forms of belief prevalent amongst men in a low social state, up to those highly developed religions which were playing so large a part in the life of civilized peoples, he would be met by a curious fact. He would find everywhere discussion on the subject. Besides an immense theological literature, exclusively devoted to the matter, he would encounter the term at every turn in the philosophical and social writings of the time. He would find a vast number of treaties and innumerable shorter works and articles in periodical publications devoted to discussions connected with the subject, and to almost every aspect of the great number of questions more or less intimately associated with it. But for one thing he would search in vain. He would probably be unable anywhere to discover any satisfactory definition of this term "religion," which all the writers were so con-

stantly using, or any general evidence that those who carried on the discussions had any definite view as to the function in our social development of the belief they disputed about, if, indeed, they considered it necessary to hold that they had any function at all. He would probably find, at a very early stage, that all the authorities could not possibly intend the word in the same sense. At the one extreme he would find that there was a certain class of believers calling themselves religious, possessed of well marked characteristics and undoubtedly influencing in a particular manner great numbers of persons. At the other he would find a class of persons claiming to speak in the name of science repudiating all the main features of these, and speaking of a true religion which would survive all that they held to be false in them, *i. e.*, all that the others held to be essential. Between these two camps he would find an irregular army of persons who seem to think that the title of religion might be properly applied to any form of belief they might hold and might choose so to describe. In the absence of any definite general conception as to what the function of a religion really was, it would appear to be held possible to apply this term to almost any form of belief (or unbelief) with equal propriety. If he attempted at last to draw up a list of some representative definitions formulated by leading authorities representing various views, he would find the definitions themselves puzzling and conflicting to an extraordinary degree."

So generally true will these observations appear to any one who has given the subject consideration, any attempt to frame a definition that will serve only as a signal post ought to be appreciated even if it fall short of being generally accepted as satisfactory.

The word at some period may have had a meaning not liable to deceive the understanding as it does at the present time, but this is by no means clear, as will appear from the writings of learned Greek and Latin authors who were familiar with the word many years before it became to the Apostle James an object of derisive comment.

Plutarch, one of the most celebrated of Greek writers, who died B. C. 120, said: "There are some philosophers who define religion to be the science of worshipping the gods," showing that there was no certain recognized definition, and that worship was the prominent idea of religion at that period.

Cicero, another celebrated writer, who died B. C. 49. said: "Superstition is a senseless fear of God, religion the pious worship of God. The gods know what sort a person one really is; they take notice with what feelings and with what piety he attends to his religious duties, and are sure to make a distinction between the good and the wicked. For not only philosophers, but even our ancestors, have drawn a distinction between superstition and religion." These remarks also show that worship was the chief feature of religion; that it had become necessary to make a distinction between superstitions and pious worship, and that as the performance of religious duties were regarded as pious or superstitious, so were the performers considered either good or bad.

Livius, who died B. C. 17, said: "Nothing is more apt to deceive by specious appearances than false religion." This remark implies that there must have been something distinctly recognized as constituting religion which could be imitated as to easily deceive, and that this so called false religion could not be an act of righteousness.

"They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus i. 16). "Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof" (II. Tim. iii. 5).

Lucretius, who died B. C. 52, said: "While men lay with slavish fear prostrate on the earth, weighed down by abject superstition, * * then at length a Greek (Epicurus) first dared to lift the veil from the eyes of man and assert his natural liberty, so much mischief was religious bigotry able to accomplish."

It is, however, by a comparative analogy to that of the word *righteousness* that you can test the real significance of the word *religion,* because the former is stamped with divine authority; it expresses all that is good in man; that which entitles him to the highest esteem of God and Christ, and qualifies him at the judgment day to enjoy everlasting life at the right hand of the Father.

Moreover, two other facts of the highest importance stand out clear and indisputable, namely: First, that the word religion was in use at least a century before the birth of Christ, and secondly, that whatever its meaning then, there is nothing in the Old Testament or in the teaching of Christ which can be construed as authority for believing that religion as then understood was materially concerned in the object of the scriptures, or in the scheme of Christianity. On the contrary, it is plainly stated that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." —II. Tim., iii. 16-17.

We have already seen the significance of the word righteousness, which, briefly expressed, is—loving God

and your neighbor as yourself—and as the word can nowhere be construed to mean the doing any service, or making any offering, sacrifice or profession said to be pleasing to God, either with that direct object or with the object of obtaining some personal favor from Him, it would seem to be self-evident that all these manifestations of belief in a Deity, and all that men do believe and profess and are concerned about for their own spiritual welfare must come within the proper definition of religion, being extraneous to and distinguishable from the meaning of the word righteousness. In other words, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous" (I. John iii. 7), but he who pretends or professes only to be righteous is religious.

As the result of a critical examination of the motives and influences towards the religion of men in all countries, and a careful survey of the whole field of the Christian religion, including the history of the administrative building in the centre called "The Church," the following is offered as a definition of religion, most comprehensive and applicable wherever the word is used, that is to say :

Man's belief in the dominating supreme power and will of God, or a Supernatural Being, and those manifestations thereof, such as sacrificial offerings, prayers, idolatry, ceremonial worship, professions, doctrines, observances, ritual, praise and obedience, which men offer or acknowledge to this Supreme Being, in the hope of securing immunity from evil or some personal benefit or reward, as He and His purposes from natural or revealed sources become the object of their fear, their dependence, their superstition, their enquiry, their flattery, their gratitude or their love.

As the word is most commonly used at the present time it may be more briefly defined as: Some act or service which men offer to God in the hope of pleasing Him and thereby obtaining some favor for themselves.

Although we may correctly qualify religion as either pure or impure, following the wise distinction made by the Apostle James, we cannot distinguish one religion from another as true or false, only as we deem our religion to be right and some other or opposing religion to be wrong simply because they do not agree. We may properly contend that the Hindu, Mahommedan or some other tribal religion is not founded on right ideas or principles, or we may rightly disapprove of the Buddhist religion, but that fact does not make any one of these religions a false religion any more than the etiquette, manners and customs of any country can be said to be false because they differ from those of our own. Religion stands to designate the peculiar methods men anywhere adopt to show their belief in, fear of, or dependence upon a dominating supernatural power, whether rightly or falsely conceived or manifested, and the word wherever used can only have this general meaning. It may be pure or impure, rightly or wrongly conceived and manifested, but it cannot be false any more than a language different from our own can be said to be false, because by it men express their ideas and thoughts in different sounds and words.

That our ablest thinkers and writers have indiscriminately and inadvertently used the word religion when discussing their own or comparing it with others, in the sense that it is true or false, is evident, and many passages from favorite authors which we intend quoting, would, we are sure, express their ideas more truthfully and clearly were

the word religion qualified or omitted and the word "righteous" substituted for the word "religious." This is important to remember, lest the opinions of others, which apparently endorse our own, should otherwise appear to be irrelevant.

That our definition of religion may not readily be acquiesced in will cause no surprise, but whatever the criticism may be, not many, we venture to think, will undertake to deny that the basic principle of religion is selfishness, the antithesis of the basic principle of righteousness.

It would therefore appear that religion stands for nothing that is pure and undefiled except works of righteousness; that everything else which may be included in its definition is not of divine origin, is not authorized or sanctioned by God, and is more of a hindrance than an aid to righteousness and Christianity.

> "For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
> His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:
> In faith and hope the world will disagree,
> But all mankind's concern is charity:
> All must be false that thwart this one great end:
> And all of God that bless mankind or mend."
>
> [POPE.]

### THE RELIGION OF CHRIST.

"If we must try to state in words the religion embodied in the person of the Christian Founder, we may perhaps resolve it into an intimate sense of filial, spiritual, responsible relation to a God of righteousness and love; an unreserved recognition of moral fraternity among men, and a reverent estimate of humanity, compelling the faith that the dead live. This is the combination of which his person is the living expression, and he in whom

they reappear is at one with Christianity; consciously, if recognizing their representation in Him; unconsciously, if repeating them apart from him.

From this primary religion of Christ, which simply speaks out the native trusts and unspoiled reverence of the human soul, which lies hid in all its justice, breathes in its pity and its prayer, and inwardly hears a pathetic poetry as the undertone of life, transfer yourself suddenly to the Christendom of to-day, watch the worship, listen to the creeds, mark the picture of the universe and the theory of existence that pervade it,—the assumption of ruin, sin and hell as the universal ground of all; the eager seizure of an exceptional escape into a select and scanty heaven: see how he who threw open the living communion between the divine and human spirit, is set to stop the way, and insist that no suppliant cry shall pass except through him; and what can be more astounding than the contrast between that pure spring in the uplands of history and this dismal stream of horrors? Who could imagine that the one has flowed from the other? that the candle-and-posture question comes from that scene at table in the upper chamber at Jerusalem? that He whom litanies and hymns without number implore to-day is the same whom we see on the mountain all night in prayer and prostrate and broken in Gethsemane? It would be inexplicable were it not that all ideal truth must apparently build a mythology around it, in order to realize its power; and then, hiding itself among the current ideas and inherited affections of men, disappears from the foreground and is replaced by secondary opinions about it, whence it comes, and whither it would go. And so it has happened that for the religion of Christ has been substituted, all through the ages, a theory about Him, what He

was in nature, what He did by coming into the world, what He left behind when He quitted it. These are the matters of which chiefly confessions and churches speak; and, by doing so, they make Him into the *object,* instead of the vehicle and source of their religion; they change Him from the "author," because supreme example, into the *end* of faith; and thus turn Him, whose very function was to leave us alone with God, into the idol and incense which interpose to hide Him. If His work is not to be utterly frustrated in the world, the whole of this mythology must be taken down as it was built up; if once it was needed to conciliate the weakness of mankind, it now alienates their strength; if to Jew or Greek, it made some elements of His religion credible, with us it runs the risks of rendering it all incredible; if ever it helped to give Christianity the lead of human intelligence, to secure for its mastership in the schools, authority in the court, and the front rank in the advance of civilization, it now reverses these effects, irritating and harassing the pioneers of knowledge, compelling reformers to disregard or defy it, and leaving theological thought upon so low a plane that minds of a high level must sink to touch it, and great statesmen and grave judges and refined scholars are no sooner in contact with it and holding forth upon it, than all robustness seems to desert their intellect, and they drift into pitiable weakness."—From Dr. Mortineau's "Seat of Authority in Religion."

## CHAPTER IV.

### RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATIONS.

*Those Sanctioned for a purpose, afterwards denounced in the Scriptures as "Beggarly Elements"—Bishop Butler on moral versus positive duties—Christ and the Sabbath.*

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"Though mankind have in all ages been greatly prone to place their religion in peculiar positive rights, by way of equivalent for obedience to moral precepts, yet, without making any comparison at all between them, and consequently without determining which is to have the preference, the nature of the thing abundantly shows all notions of that kind to be utterly subversive of true religion, as they are, moreover, contrary to the whole general tenor of Scripture, and likewise to the most express particular declarations of it, that nothing can render us accepted of God without moral virtue."—Bishop Butler.

Any attempt to criticize all the known religious manifestations and practices peculiar to nations, denominations and sects would be a stupendous and unnecessary task—unnecessary, because it is our object to question only such as are not already condemned by those whose manifestations are considered objectionable, with the twofold object of discovering to what extent those of scriptural or divine origin are necessary to Christianity; and secondly, if those derived from natural sources are likely to be acceptable to God.

To those whose eyes are open to the wonderful sim-

plicity of godliness, as it becomes divested of all form and ceremony intended only as services to God, and yet have not failed in perceiving that owing to the mistaken object of revelation, men have not yet recognized the better and surer way of knowing God, there is every reason for believing that in the earlier history of mankind the difficulties in the way of establishing a belief in, and allegiance to Him, were very great.

When the people saw that Moses delayed descending from the mount they gathered themselves unto Aaron and said unto him, "Up make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him."—Ex. xxxii. 21.

This incident of itself, and the fact that Aaron so readily yielded to the wishes of the people, go far to reconcile one's belief that certain rites, ceremonies and ordinances, also circumcision, the Sabbath, the tabernacle and ark of the covenant were special means (if sanctioned by God) for bringing the children of Israel to a knowledge of Him. Nor are we without scriptural authority for this belief. See Num. xiv. 11 ; Ex. xxix, 46 ; Tx. xxxi. 13 ; I. Kings vii. 60, and Ezekiel xx. 12.

These were to be the means only to an end, and when the object was accomplished their usefulness was gone, and if continued or practised for their own sake only they were condemned as beggarly elements, etc.

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage ? Ye observe days and months and times and years. I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."—Gal. iv. 9-10.

"And hereby do we know that we know him if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him."—I. John ii. 3-4.

"Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come." —Col. ii. 16.

"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."

"Above when he said," quoting the words of David (Ps. xl. 6, etc), "Sacrifice and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the law, then said he, 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.' He taketh away the first that he may establish the second."—Heb. x. 1, 8 and 9.

"Gifts and sacrifices could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience, which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."—Heb. ix. 9-10.

"For there is, verily, a disannulling of the commandments going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God."—Heb. vii. 18-19.

"Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love."—Gal. v., 2, 6 and 15.

"Upon the occasion of mentioning together positive and moral duties, the scripture always puts the stress of religion upon the latter and never upon the former, which, though no sort of allowance to neglect the former when they do not interfere with the latter, yet is plain intimation that when they do the latter are to be preferred.

"And as mankind are for placing the stress of their religions anywhere rather than upon virtue, lest both the reason of the thing and the general spirit of Christianity, appearing in the intimation, now mentioned, should be ineffectual against this prevalent folly, our Lord himself, from whose command alone the obligation of positive institutions arises, has taken occasion to make the corparison between them and moral precepts, when the Pharisees censured him for eating with publicans and sinners, and also when they censured his disciples for plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath day. Upon this comparison he has determined expressly, and in form, which shall have the preference when they interfere. And by delivering his authoritative determination in a proverbial manner of expression he has made it general. *I will have mercy and not sacrifice.*"—Matt. ix. 13, and xii. 7.

"That the manner of speaking very remarkably renders the determination general is surely indisputable. For, had it in the latter case been said only that God preferred mercy to the rigid observance of the Sabbath, even then by parity of reason most justly might we have argued that he preferred mercy likewise in the observance of ritual institutions, and, in general moral duties to positive ones, and thus the determination would have been general, though its being so were inferred and not expressed. But as the passage really stands in the gospel, it is much stronger, for the sense and the very literal

words of our Lord's answers are as applicable to any other instance of a comparison between positive and moral duties as to this upon which they were spoken. And if, in case of competition, mercy is to be preferred to positive institutions, it will scarcely be thought that justice is to give place to them. It is remarkable, too, that as the words are a quotation from the Old Testament, they are introduced on both the forementioned occasions with a declaration that the Pharisees did not understand the meaning of them. This, I say, is very remarkable, for since it is scarcely possible for the most ignorant person not to understand the literal sense of the passage in Prophet Hos. vi., and since understanding the literal sense would not have prevented their condemning the guiltless (see Matt. xii. 7), it can hardly be doubted that the thing which our Lord really intended in that declaration was, that the Pharisees had not learnt from it as they might, wherein the general spirit of religion exists; that it consists in moral piety and virtue as distinguished from forms and ritual observances. However, it is certain we may learn this from his divine application of the passage in the gospel."—Bishop Butler.

## CHAPTER V.

### RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATIONS—CONTINUED.

*Those of human origin—Denounced in the Scriptures as unnecessary, weak, unprofitable and unacceptable to God.*

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This chapter is important, not only in showing how emphatically they are denounced as unnecessary, weak, unprofitable, displeasing and unacceptable to God, but in pointing out the indispensable acts of righteousness which ought rather to have been manifested, and which ought not to have been omitted or neglected.

We find the earliest, or first recorded manifestation of man's submission to the Deity, in the report of the sacrificial offerings of Cain and Abel. So far as we are able to form any judgment now, the reason why Cain's offering was not accepted, having regard to the fact that his brother's accepted offering caused hatred in Cain's heart, and made him his brother's murderer, was because Cain's offering was not prompted by gratitude or love.

The tenor of all the Scriptural denunciations of such manifestations confirms this, apart from the authority of the Apostle John, who said: "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous."—I. John iii. 12.

The more we know and appreciate that inevitable law of nature affecting the freedom of man's will, the less cause there will be to wonder why it was that the right-

eous Abel became the victim of his unrighteous brother's wrath.

It affords, however, some foundation for believing this, that if the Scriptures were divinely inspired, the earliest opportunity was taken to show the serious results likely to follow upon hypocrisy towards God, and that no gift, offering or sacrifice would be accepted by Him, where he who did the service had not brotherly love, was "not perfect as pertaining to the conscience," or in other words, had evil dwelling in his heart.

Moreover, we also become impressed with the belief that God did not wish to encourage any such overt manifestation as Abel's offering, which receives confirmation as we turn to Leviticus xix. 4-5, where God, by the mouth of Moses, addressed the Israelites as follows: "Turn ye not unto idols nor make to yourself molten gods; I am the Lord your God. And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord, *ye shall offer it at your own will.*"

We have next the account of Saul sparing among the spoils taken from the Amalekites the best of the oxen, sheep and lambs, contrary to the command of God, and although Saul's excuse was that these were spared "to sacrifice unto the Lord," his disobedience cost him his kingdom—so much more important was it to do the will of God than to try and flatter Him with gifts and sacrifices.

And Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of lambs."—I. Samuel xv. 22.

The building of the Temple by King Solomon is another religious manifestation emanating from man, although conditionally approved of by God, for the same

reason that He specially instituted the building of the Tabernacle and certain ordinances before referred to. The idea of building the Temple originated with King David, but although it was the desire of his heart, and there is reason to believe his motives were good, he was not permitted to do so, because he had "shed much blood upon the earth in God's sight."—Chronicles xxii. 8.

Undoubtedly the Temple afforded the children of Israel many facilities for a closer relationship with God. We know, however, what followed, as a consequence of their, and the house of David, "not continuing to walk in integrity of heart and uprightness," doing God's will:—the Temple was destroyed, as God promised Solomon it would be, if he or his children turned from following Him.—I. Kings ix. 6 etc., and II. Kings xxv. 9.

There is nothing held more sacred by man than human life, a king's throne, and a building dedicated to God, but we have seen that God had no respect for any of these objects of sanctity where men have more regard for them and vain oblations and sacrifices than respect for His laws.

David knew this, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offering and sin offering thou hast not required."—Ps. xl. 6.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."—Ps. li. 17.

Solomon also knew this, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination; how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind."—Pro. xxi. 3 and 27.

"He that keepeth the law bringeth offerings enough; he that taketh heed to the commandments offereth a peace

offering; he that requiteth a good turn offereth fine flour, and he that giveth alms sacrificeth praise."—Eccles. xxxv. 1-2.

It appears to have been characteristic of the Israelites that the more "laden with iniquity" (Isaiah i. 4), the more they continued in their hypocritical manifestations of religion. The student of Old Testament history cannot fail to be impressed with this fact, and to observe that whenever God through His prophets denounced their sins, He let it be known in plain and unmistakable language how he abominated and despised these vain and unprofitable religious manifestations; nor is it less clearly expressed what He required of them instead, namely, righteousness and that perfection in man afterwards manifested in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?" saith the Lord. "I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth, they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."—Isaiah i. 10 to 17.

"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold in the day of your fast ye find pleasure and exact all your labor. Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a feast and an acceptable day to the Lord? *Is not this the fact that I have chosen to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thy own flesh.* Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward."—Isaiah lviii. 1 to 8.

"Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye built unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man I will look,

even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations."—Isaiah lxvi. 1-2-3. See also Jeremiah vii. 21-22.

"For I desired mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."—Hosea vi. 6. See also Amos v. 21 to 27.

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the High God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."—Micah vi. 6-7-8.

During the period of Christ's ministry the state of religion among the Jews was low. There were several sects, the most popular and by far the most numerous being the Pharisees. In their religious practices they pretended to uncommon strictness. They abounded in washings, fastings, long prayers and lip worship. They assumed great gravity in dress and demeanor, and exhibited no small zeal in all the forms of religion. But with all their professions they were noted for their hypocrisy.

The sayings of Jesus and his apostles show what hindrances these religious manifestations were to righteous-

ness and Christianity, and that it was by doing the will of God and not by means of these observances that the Jews could hope to enter into the kingdom of heaven. See Matt. vii. 21; Matt xv. 7-8-9; Matt xxiii; Mark xii. 32-33-34; Acts xvii. 24-25-29-30.

## CHAPTER VI.

RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATIONS—CONTINUED.

*Worship as viewed in the light of nature—When outward worship acceptable to God.*

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The most common, and in countries professing Christianity, almost universally believed in as necessary and distinct features of religion, are such as come under that form of service to God called worship.

This particular religious manifestation is not peculiar to the individual, but to congregations, and forms a particular reason for the existence of consecrated cathedrals, churches and chapels.

We have already seen that it nowhere appears in revelation that God requires man to utter or sing praises to Him, but on the contrary as lip worship by those whose hearts are far from God, it is denounced as hypocrisy both in the Old and New Testament.

What is desired regarding worship as a direct service to God arising from natural sources, is to ascertain from reason, the exercise of our natural faculties, and what conscience or the divine spirit within us suggests, as the manner in which, and the time and place when and where men should give vent to their feelings of love and gratitude to God as an outward form of worship acceptable to Him.

"If we consider the idea which wise men, by the light of nature, have formed of the Divine Being, it amounts to this: that He has in Him all the perfection of a spirit-

ual nature. And, since we have no notion of any kind of spiritual perfection, but what we discover in our own souls, we join infinitude to each of these perfections, and what is a faculty in a human soul becomes an attribute in God."—Addison.

"Holiness, justice, veracity, mercy and all other moral perfections ought to be ascribed to God in an infinite degree."

"The events of life and the use of language begets such trains of ideas and associations in us, as that we cannot but ascribe all morally good qualities, and all venerable and amiable appellations to the Deity; at the same time that we perceive the meaning of our expressions not to be strictly the same as when they are applied to men; but an analogical meaning, however a higher, more pure and more perfect one. The justness of this application is farther confirmed by the common consent of all ages and nations, and by the whole tenor of the Scriptures."—Hartley.

"There is most evident ground to think that the government of God upon the whole will be found to correspond to the nature He has given to us."—Bishop Butler.

Gratitude is that spontaneous feeling of joy and thankfulness, which is excited in the heart, as one experiences and appreciates some gift, favor, benefit or kind charitable or benevolent act of another.

It is not the will of God, nor in the power of man to compel one to have this feeling, simply because to be worth anything, it must be purely voluntary and without coercion.

The absence too, of any prompting, suggesting or compulsion in giving vent to this feeling is the very essence and genuineness of its nature and character.

Nor is the feeling like a current of electricity capable of being transmitted or communicated from one to another. Like charity, gratitude never boasteth or vaunteth itself. "The humility of gratitude toucheth the heart and is amiable in the sight of both God and man" (Ancient Braman). It is an individual affection which as much as any other unites the divine with the human.

"If I have only will to be grateful I am so" (Seneca). We are all constrained by common civility and amenities of social life to give thanks for everything we receive, and for mere trifles we ought to say a pleasant "thank you," if only as an acknowledgment of the favor conferred, for man knoweth not as God does the feeling of the heart. But it is an undeniable fact that the more the gift, favor, or benefit which an unselfish love and beneficent spirit prompts one to bestow is appreciated by the receiver in a truly grateful spirit, the less capable is he, in the fulness of his heart, of expressing his thanks in words.

As Shakespeare says, "Silence is the perfectest herald of joy,—I were but little happy if I could say how much," and according to Colton, "No metaphysician ever felt the deficiency of language so much as the grateful."

"Unless the Almighty had been under me I think I should have been overwhelmed with joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear overwhelmed with love and wonder."—Cowper.

> **"Oh! how shall words with equal warmth**
> **The gratitude declare**
> **That glows within my ravish'd heart?**
> **But thou canst read it there."** [ADDISON.]

If you desire to test a man's gratitude, observe in what manner he treats or makes use of the gift bestowed.

Profession is no proof of gratitude. The man with the least gratitude will generally be found to be most profuse in his thanks, for were he honest enough to be truthful even in silence, he would not accept a favor he could not appreciate. On the other hand, the best evidence of ingratitude is where a man profuse in his thanks makes an improper, careless or indifferent use of the gift.

Shakespeare understood human nature, and in the characters of Goneril and Regan, King Lear's daughters, he exposes the vilest ingratitude after the most vehement profession of love to their aged father, whilst he immortalized the name and character of their sister Cordelia who, without making any profession, was steadfast in love, and truth, although denied a share of her father's affection and kingdom.

Real gratitude, like real grief, cannot be controlled : you cannot produce it at appointed times, nor set a place in which to give evidence of it.

If you see a man boldly risk his life to save that of a child, or in doing some other noble deed, and moved by that inward spirit of gratitude you should at once exclaim, "Well done! that was a noble deed!" Your act of worship was completed when you uttered these words of praise. You would not repeat them, because they would not be acceptable, nor would you dare call the next day, with these or any other words of praise, knowing that by doing so you would offend him.

"He that praiseth his friend aloud, rising early, it shall be to him no better than a curse."—(Solomon)—Prov. xxvii. 14.

That spontaneous feeling of gratitude, that inward moving spirit which the noble deed excited in you, will not act again from the mere thought or recollection of the deed. However much, therefore, your appreciation

may continue and you may properly speak of it in words of praise to others, should you seek on some other occasion to reiterate your praises to the child's benefactor, it would not be the heart, but something outside your spiritual nature which prompted you to speak.

Now, if the worship or praise of man is but the single impulsive expression of joy bursting from an overcharged instinctive or spiritual feeling of gratitude or reverence, caused by a noble act of your fellow man, can it not by analogy be said that for every feeling of gratitude towards your Heavenly Father, whether caused by actual observation of His love, bounties or mercy, or caused by contemplation of His greatness, power and wonderful works, there can arise but one sincere and true inward act of worship, as the heart is quickened, momentarily, under the influence of the divine spirit within you, and that all subsequent or renewed acts of worship, and all special and prearranged rites, observances, and religious ceremonies instituted by man, are unnecessary and incongruous, and especially so if prompted by other than the purest feelings of gratitude and love. Moreover, since God knoweth well the heart of man, whether we are silent from choice, or from inability to express our admiration, gratitude, or love in words, if we have the feeling in our hearts are we not nevertheless worshipping Him "in spirit and in truth?"

"Let us next consider, viewed in the light of nature, how far God is likely to be pleased with manifestations of gratitude or love, when their only object is directly to praise and worship Him.

"That which God himself does, we are sure is well done; and we are no less sure that for whatsoever he gives, he neither wants, expects nor receives anything in return; so that the end of a benefit ought to be the ad-

vantage of the receiver, and that must be our scope without any by-regard to ourselves."

"A generous man gives easily and receives as he gives, but never exacts. He rejoices in the return, and judges favorably of it whatever it may be, and contents himself with bare thanks for a requital." "He that takes a benefit as it is meant is in the right; for the benefactor has then his end, and his only end, when the receiver is grateful."—Seneca.

A person out of employment and in need, informs you that if he could present a better appearance it would improve his chances of obtaining a situation, and you, believing him to be a deserving object of charity, give to him a suit of clothes. Now, if after his first thanking you he should come again to praise you for this your act of kindness, you would most likely say to him, "My good man, I did not wish your thanks, but if you desire to show your gratitude in a manner most pleasing and acceptable to me, do your utmost to keep the situation; behave yourself, and do right." What would you think, however, should he return, or call regularly with the same object, or attempted to praise you in public? Would you not begin to distrust him? Would you not feel that he had some object other than a true expression of gratitude? and would it not be casting a reflection, offensive to you, on the true motive of your charity? According to the wisdom of Solomon it is not unlikely that this would be a "curse to him," because it is not in the nature of a deserving man to do this, and not in the nature of such a benefactor to give an undeserving one a second opportunity.

"To remember a man of a kindness conferred and to talk of it, is little different from reproach."—Demosthenes.

Again, where pure and sincere love is mutual between

male and female, is it not true that flattery is a stranger to those "kindred tastes and feelings which fasten mind to mind?" whereas, where there is no mutual sincerity is it not flattery that is commonly employed as a means of deception?

"Minds, by nature great, are conscious of their greatness, and hold it mean to borrow aught from flattery."—Rowe.

"Beware also of him who flatters you and commends you to your face, or to one he thinks will tell you of it; most probably he has either deceived and abused you, or means to do so. Remember the fable of the fox and the crow."—Sir Matt. Hale.

"He does me double wrong who wounds me with the flatteries of his tongue."—Shakespeare.

> "By love's religion, I must here confess it,
> The most I love when I the least express it!
> Small griefs find tongues; full casks are ever found
> To give, if any, yet but little sound;
> Deep waters noiseless are; and this we know,
> That chiding streams betray small depths below;
> So, when love speechless is, she doth express,
> A depth in love, and that depth bottomless."
>
> [Herrick.]

What shall we say, therefore, from the analogy of nature, respecting those religious manifestations supposed to be founded on gratitude and love, about which so many men of various denominations spend so much valuable time, to the neglect of those practical works of Christianity which God requires of them? Is it not contrary to our conception of the Deity if He has any pleasure therein? One thing is certain, we would not think of treating our earthly father, lover or friend in the same way we treat God for fear of offending them. Let

everyone be persuaded in his own mind, which may be like unto our Heavenly Father's more than we imagine, for is it not written, "Come let us reason together, saith the Lord!"

The inference (and undoubtedly a correct one) which the late George Combe drew from the manifestations of the Divine character is this, "that God veils from us His individual or personal nature, to avert from our minds every conception that He stands in need of us, or of our homage or services, *for his own sake*, so that we may have neither temptation nor apology for adopting a system of worship such as we should address to a being whom we desired to flatter or please by our attention; and that He reveals to us His moral and intellectual attributes, to intimate to us that the worship which will meet with His approbation, is that which will best carry into execution His will in that department of creation, which is placed under the dominion of man as a rational and responsible being."

Notwithstanding, however, the fact that nowhere in revelation does it appear that it is the desire or will of God that man should worship Him, it does not follow that our Heavenly Father should not be honored and glorified. Indeed, there are occasions when a truly good and righteous man cannot be restrained from exercising some external act of worship. The only question is, in what form our homage, allegiance and adoration should be manifested that it may be acceptable, when it is offered independent of God's will. For in doing God's will, by manifesting His greatness in ourselves, in effectuating the object of our creation and existence, we are certainly honoring and glorifying Him in a manner the most pleasing and acceptable, and there is reason for believing that the more we glorify and honor God in this way, the closer

our communion and friendship with Him, and the less inclination there is to resort to any formal act of servitude or worship.

Where, however, man's inclination leads, or his overcharged heart compels him to any external act of worship, the most simple, humble and (according to our reasoning faculties) acceptable form, would appear to be that adopted by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. There is perhaps no period in the history of man where pure simplicity of godliness is better exemplified than in that including the lives of these righteous men. You cannot find a word of rebuke to them for their religious manifestations. They worshipped God "by bowing themselves to the earth."—Gen. xxiv. 52; Ex. iv. 31; Ex. vii. 27; Ex. xxxiv. 8; I. Chron. xxix. 10, and see I. Cor. xiv. 25.

Nor can there be found anything in the teaching of Jesus, which shows that God requires of men any religion, or any new form of righteousness different from that which qualified Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to seats in His heavenly kingdom.—See Matt. viii. 11.

Lastly, let no one be deceived into believing that any but the truly righteous can expect that even this simple and humble form of worship will be accepted, for if one fact stands out more clearly than another it is this, that there is positively no hope either in the light of revelation or nature that the wicked can offer any form of worship to God that will be acceptable to Him.

"The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the wicked, neither is he pacified for sin by the multitude of sacrifices."—Eccles. xxxiv. 19.

"Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner, for it was not sent him of the Lord."—Eccles. xv. 9.

## CHAPTER VII.

### RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATIONS—CONTINUED.

*Other men's minds respecting forms, ceremonies, etc.*

"The law of nature indispensably requires a direct outward worship so far as is necessary to show that we do not condemn the Deity, and not so far as it consists in giving a positive honor to the Deity by some exterior acts, the omission of which is no sign of contempt to Him. For God has no need of our service, and that as He is the searcher of hearts, the inward worship, without which all outward acts of piety are of no worth, is sufficient to discharge us of the obligation we owe to the Supreme Being on whom we depend. The omission of the outward worship does not hurt either human society in general, nor civil society in particular, provided there be an inward worship paid."—Thomasins' Instit. Jurispr. Divin. Liber 2, Chap. I, Sec. 11.

"The multiplying forms, ceremonies and external services in the affairs of religion is quite contrary to the nature and genius of Christianity, and tends directly to destroy that kingdom which the gospel was intended to erect, and to introduce that which it was intended to overthrow, by leading men to ascribe a worth and efficacy to things of a positive and ritual nature far beyond their real importance, and to depreciate and undervalue inward piety and goodness of disposition."—Rev. Charles Buckley.

"A man of a catholic spirit is one who gives his hand to all whose hearts are right with his heart; one who

knows how to value and praise God for all the advantages he enjoys with regard to the knowledge of the things of God; the true spiritual manner of worshiping Him."—John Wesley.

"It is certain there is something in religious superstitions very pernicious to mankind and destructive to religion, because the injunction of superfluous ceremonies makes such actions duties, as were before indifferent, and by that means renders religion more burdensome and difficult than it is in its own nature; betrays many into sins of omission which they could not otherwise be guilty of, and fixes the mind of the vulgar to the shadowy unessential points, instead of the more weighty and more important matters of the law. If instead of prescribing to ourselves indifferent actions as duties, we apply a good intention to all our most indifferent actions, we make our very existence one continued act of obedience, we turn our diversions and amusements to our eternal advantage, and are pleasing Him, whom we are made to please, in all the circumstances and occurrences of life."—Addison.

"Common sense has satisfied all mankind, that it is above their reach to determine what ceremonies and outward performances in their own nature indifferent, were fit to be made use of in religion and would be acceptable to the superior beings in worship. It was so obvious and visible that it became men to have leave from God himself, before they dared offer to Him any trifling, mean, and to Him useless things as a great and valuable part of His worship, that nobody anywhere amongst the various and strange religions they lead men into, bid such open defiance to common sense, and the reason of all mankind, as to presume to do it without vouching the appointment of God himself. If those rights and ceremonies prescribed to the Jews by God himself and delivered at

the same time, and by the same hand to the Jews as the moral law were called beggarly elements under the Gospel, and laid by as useless and burthensome, what shall we call those rights which have no other foundation, but the will and the authority of men, and of men very often who have not much thought of the purity of religion, and have practised it less?"—Locke.

"All the life and power of true religion consists in the outward and full persuasion of the mind; and faith is not faith without believing. Whatever profession we make, to whatever outward worship we conform, if we are not fully satisfied in our own mind that the one is true, and the other well pleasing unto God, such profession and such practice, far from being any furtherance, are indeed great obstacles to our salvation. For in this matter, instead of expiating other sins by the exercise of religion, I say, in offering thus unto God Almighty such a worship as we esteem to be displeasing unto Him, we add unto the number of our other sins those also of hypocrisy and contempt of His Divine Majesty."

"Why does this burning zeal for God, for the church, and for the salvation of souls; burning, I say, literally, with fire and faggot, pass by moral vices and wickedness, without any chastisement, which are acknowledged by all men to be distinctively opposite to the profession of Christianity, and bend all its nerves either to the introducing of ceremonies, or to the establishment of opinions which for the most part are about nice and intricate matters beyond the capacity of ordinary understandings? He, certainly, that follows Christ, embraces His doctrine, and bears His yoke, though he forsake both father and mother, separate from the public assemblies and ceremonies of his country, or whomsoever, or whatsoever else

he relinquishes, will not then be judged an heretic."—Locke.

"It were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of Him, for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely, and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. As the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. The causes of superstition are: Pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharasaical holiness; over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations; and lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition without a veil is a deformed thing; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man; so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed."—Lord Bacon.

"As it is the function of the *prophetic* spirit to keep alive the ideality of conscience, and interpret it as God's own light within the soul, so it is the business of the *priestly* office to lay its disquietudes to rest, and by outward methods specially its own to reinstate the broken harmony. The priest could never be, but for the noble dis-

content, the divine sorrow, with which the prophets electrify the murky air of life, and divide it into heavenly dreams and stormy glooms. The priest lives upon the shame and misery of stricken souls that are in haste to find peace with themselves and with their God; he offers to take them to their rest, not by pure and inward reconciliation that would speak for itself in its own harmonies, but by magic ways which ask no aid of the human will, and make no report to the human heart. The whole institution of sacrifice, which forms the very substance of all, ancient worship, and the proper business of a sacredotal order, arises, it cannot be doubted, from the consciousness of imperilled peace between earth and heaven, and the desire to do something which might conciliate the smile, or break up the frown, of the Supreme Powers. It was an attempt to restore the right relations between the visible and the invisible world; and however low the expiatory conceptions that mingle with it, it still attests the conscious variance between the human and the Divine, and proclaims its perpetuity by a never ceasing effort to get rid of it. But every priestly device for this end is but a pretence at wiping out the shadow while the substance that casts it still is there; and when the process is over, and the magician is gone, the darkness lies as before within its silent shrine."—Doctor Martineau.

In the preface to the Church of England Book of Common Prayer, it is declared that the particular forms of Divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies to be used therein, are things in their own nature indifferent. And, of ceremonies, why some are abolished and some retained: "Some are put away because the great excess and multitude of them have so increased in these latter days that the burden of them was intolerable, whereof St. Augus-

tine, in his time complained that they were grown to such a number, that the estate of Christian people was in worse case concerning that matter than were the Jews, and he counselled that such yoke and burden should be taken away, as time would serve quietly to do it. But what would St. Augustine have said, if he had seen the ceremonies of late days used among us, whereunto the multitude used in his time was not to be compared? This our excessive multitude of ceremonies was so great, and many of them so dark, that they did more to confound and darken than declare and set forth Christ's benefits unto us. And besides this, Christ's gospel is not a ceremonial law (as much of Moses' law was), but it is a religion to serve God, not in bondage of the figure or shadow, but in the freedom of the spirit."

"Nay, not only our preaching, but even our worship, is not it too accomplished by means of printed books? The noble sentiment which a gifted soul has clothed for us in melodious words, which brings melody into our hearts—is not this essentially, if we will understand it, of the nature of worship? There are many in all countries, who in this confused time have no other method of worship. He who, in any way, shows us better than we knew before that a lily of the field is beautiful, does he not show it us as an effluence of the fountain of all beauty; as the handwriting made visible there of the Great Maker of the Universe? He has sung with us, made us sing with him a little verse of a sacred psalm. Essentially so. How much more he who sings, who says, or in any way brings home to our hearts, the noble doings, feelings, darings, and endurances of brother man? He has verily touched our hearts as with a live coal from the altar. Perhaps there is no worship more authentic."—Thomas Carlyle.

"It is not the incense, or the offering that is acceptable to God, but the purity and devotion of the worshipper. God is not to be worshipped with sacrifices and blood, for what pleasure can he have in the slaughter of the innocents? but with a pure mind, a good and honest purpose. Temples are not to be built for Him with stones piled on high. God is to be consecrated in the breast of each."—Seneca.

"What lack I, O my children?
All things are in my hand;
The vast earth and the awful stars
I hold as grains of sand.

"Need I your alms? The silver
And gold are mine alone;
The gifts ye bring before me
Were evermore my own.

"Heed I the noise of viols,
Your pomp of masque and show?
Have I not dawns and sunsets?
Have I not winds that blow?

"Do I smell your gums of incense?
Is my ear with chantings fed?
Taste I your wine of worship,
Or eat your holy bread?

"Ye change to weary burdens
The helps that should uplift;
Ye lose in form the spirit,
The giver in the gift.

"Who called ye to self torment,
To fast and penance vain?
Dream ye eternal Goodness
Has joy in mortal pain?

"Who counts his brother's welfare
As sacred as his own,

And loves, forgives and pities,
He serveth me alone.

"I loathe your wrangling councils,
I tread upon your creeds:
Who made ye mine avengers
Or told ye all my needs?

"Ye bow to ghastly symbols,
To cross and scourge and thorn;
Ye seek the Syrian manger
Who in the heart is born.

"O blind ones, onward groping,
The idle quest forego;
Who listens to his inward voice
Alone of him shall know.

"What if the o'erturned altar
Lays bare the ancient lie?
What if the dreams and legends
Of the world's childhood die?

"The stern behest of duty,
The doom book open thrown,
The heaven ye seek, the hell ye fear,
Are with yourselves alone." [WHITTIER.]

"There is no indication of the object of any of the arrangements of creation being to gratify an inferior feeling in the creator himself. No well constituted mind, indeed, could conceive Him commanding beings He called into existence, and whom He could annihilate in a moment, to do any act of homage, which had reference merely to the acknowledgment of His authority, solely for His personal gratification, and without regard to their own welfare and enjoyment. We cannot, without absolute outrage to the moral sentiments, and the intellect imagine His doing anything analogous to the act of the Swiss governor,—placing an emblem of his authority on high, and requiring his creatures to obey it, merely to

gratify himself by their homage, to their own disparagement and distress."—George Combe.

"If instead of the 'glad tidings,' that there exists a Being in whom all the excellencies which the highest human mind can conceive exist in a degree inconceivable to us, I am informed that the world is ruled by a Being whose attributes are infinite, but what they are we cannot learn, nor what are the principles of His government, except that 'the highest human morality which we are capable of conceiving' does not sanction them—convince me of it, and I will bear my fate as I may. But when I am told that I must believe this, and at the same time call this Being by the names which express and affirm the highest human morality, I say in plain terms that I will not. Whatever power such a Being may have over me, there is one thing which He shall not do—he shall not compel me to worship Him. I will call no Being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures; and if such a Being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go."—From Mills' examination of Hamilton, c. 7, pp. 102-3.

"If he is right," Doctor Martineau says, "as assuredly he is, then there is a claim upon us in veracity, an appeal to us in righteousness which no extremity of consequences can cancel, but which will stand fast in the face of an infinitude of agony taken in place of a forfeited infinitude of joy."

> "Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round
> Of smooth and solemnized complacencies
> By which, in Christian lands, from age to age,
> Profession mocks performance. Earth is sick
> And Heaven is weary of the hollow words
> Which States and kingdoms utter when they talk
> Of truth and justice." [WORDSWORTH.]

"What art thou, thou idle ceremony?
What kind of good art thou, that suffer'st more
Of mortal griefs than do thy worshippers?
What are thy rents? What are thy comings in?
O ceremony, shew me but thy worth!
What is the soul of adoration?
Art thou aught else but place, degree and form,
Creating awe and fear in other men?
Wherein thou art less happy, being fear'd,
Than they in fearing:
What drink'st thou oft, instead of homage sweet,
But poison'd flattery?" [SHAKESPEARE.]

"Of all hypocrites, the religious is the worst, because that which he professes is infinitely above everything in which deception can possibly be practised."—Dr. Davies.

"No man's condition is so base as his;
None more accursed than he; for man esteems
Him hateful 'cause he seems not what he is;
God hates him 'cause he is not what he seems:
What grief is absent, or what mischief can
Be added to the hate of God and man?"

[F. QUARLES.]

"Grace is the new nature of a Christian, and hypocrisy that art that counterfeits it, and the more exquisite it is in imitation it is the more plausible to man, but the more abominable to God."—Dr. South.

"In religion, as in friendship, they who profess most are ever the least sincere."—Sheridan.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### RELIGION AND THE CHURCH.

*Some Historical facts relating to, since the birth of Christ.*

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Religion! Religion! What crimes are committed in thy name!

Every student of Bible history will acknowledge that all the admonitory teaching of the prophets, Christ and the Apostles, is not directed against the "sins of the flesh," and that whilst such as are occasioned by evil minds, and slanderous and mischievous tongues, and cannot be prohibited, nor be adequately deterred or overcome by penalized human laws, comprise a large proportion of the catalogue of offences, and acts of unrighteousness, which it is the object of revelation to denounce, it will be found on examination that religion is answerable for many other sins, transgressions and offences condemned by the Scriptures. Jesus was not religious; if he had been he would not have been crucified. There is no mystery in his godliness. He had no abstruse doctrines. He taught and practised only what everyone was capable of understanding and realizing,—the simple doctrine of "Peace on earth and good will towards men." He had no use for ceremonies, forms, observances, sacrifices, burnt offerings, fastings, ritual and all other religious manifestations and outward forms of godliness. He realized that all these were foes to righteousness. He condemned even prayers when lengthy and offered in

public. The Jewish religious restrictions of the Sabbath found no favor with Him, and He offered an everlasting rebuke to those who disapproved of innocent employment on that day. He despised the religious rites and ceremonies of the Temple, and took no interest in, and apparently was not even familiar with the buildings comprising that edifice. (Matt. xxiv. 1). He was never so scornful or bitter as when denouncing religious hypocrisies, and those who seemingly were most religious were His greatest enemies.

We have seen in a former chapter what strict religionists the Pharisees were, and it is needless to add that the chief priests, scribes and elders were the chief representatives and exponents of that religion which was the principal cause of Christ's persecution and martyrdom. It was the Pharisees who attended the synagogue that took counsel to destroy Jesus because he healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day.—Matt. xii. 14.

It was the Pharisees who tempted Jesus with matters of religious doctrine. It was the chief priests and scribes, who, displeased with the wonderful things Christ said and did, sought to lay hands on him in the Temple. —Matt. xxi. 15 and 46.

It was the chief priests, scribes and elders who assembled in the palace of the High Priest and consulted together how they could "take Jesus by subtilty and kill him."—Matt. xxvi. 3-4.

It was the chief priests and elders who invited the people to go forth with swords and staves to take Jesus.

It was before Caiaphas, the High Priest, the scribes and elders, that Christ was taken, and they it was who condemned him and spat in his face, buffeted and struck him.—Matt. xxvi.

It was the chief priests and elders who persuaded the multitude to release Barabbas and to destroy Jesus.

It was the chief priests who mocked him on the cross and crucified him.

It was the priests and captain of the Temple who imprisoned Peter and John for preaching.—Acts iv. 1; Acts v. 17.

It was the priests, elders and scribes who caused the Apostle Stephen to be stoned to death after he denounced them as the "betrayers and murderers of Christ."—Acts vii. 52.

It was the high priests and Pharisees who persecuted Paul. It was the high priest, Ananias, who stood by ready to smite Paul when a prisoner at Jerusalem.—Acts xxiii. 2. And why? Because as Paul confessed, it was "after the way which they (his persecutors) called heresy, he worshipped the God of his fathers."—Acts xxiv. 14.

History could not present a much more appalling or heart-rending account of the churches of the Christians and their avowed religion since the death of Christ until the period of the Reformation, and indeed for some time thereafter.

The period from A. D. 70 to A. D. 306 was one of continued persecution of Christians, with more or less severity, according as the reigning Emperor sympathized or not with the church. But periods of peace did not strengthen the religion of Christ or prevent apostacy.

Milner, speaking of the state of the church after forty years' rest, prior to the reign of Delius, 249, says: "It deserves to be remarked that the first grand and general declension, after the primary effusion of the Divine Spirit, should be fixed about the middle of this century."

Ambition, pride and luxury had greatly sullied the simplicity and purity of former days. Although the Emperor Dioclesian for eighteen years was kindly disposed towards the Christians, the interval of rest was far from adding to the honor of the church. At no period since the days of the Apostles had there been so general a decay of vital godliness, as in this; ministers and people became jealous of one another; ambition and covetousness became ascendant; worship was generally observed, but the spirit which had so nobly and zealously influenced a Cyprian, a Dionysius and a Gregory, resembling the spirit of apostolic times—was gone.

Upon the death of Licinius in 323, at which time Constantine succeeded to the whole Roman Empire, Christianity was universally established, no other religion being tolerated throughout the bounds of the Empire. But instead of this Christian ascendancy over paganism, producing a corresponding degree of purity, of meekness and humility among the churches of Christ, the spirit of pride, of avarice, of ostentation and domination, invaded both the officers and members. Schisms were generated, heretical doctrines were promulgated, and a foundation laid for an awful debasement and declension of Christianity.

The history of the church from this period to the 17th century shows that Christianity existed only in the name. Forms, ritual and ceremonies generating the vilest hypocrisy were practised, and every conceivable device was instigated to strengthen the power and enlarge the dominion of the church, not for the love of God, and the purification and perfection of man, but for the purposes of aggrandizement, profligacy, external pomp and worldly power.

"The history of the Roman Pontiffs who lived in this (10th) century," says Mosheim, "is a history of so many monsters, and not of men; and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous and complicated crimes, as all writers, even those of the Roman community, unanimously confess."

For nearly two centuries (from 1095) Europe was disturbed by the crusaders' attempt to rescue the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidels, and many were the privations which almost every family was called to endure on account of them. The loss of human life was immense. Two millions of Europeans were supposed to have been buried in the east.

"The immediate effects of the crusades upon the moral and religious state of the world were deplorable. The superstition of the times, already great, was much increased by them, as were the power and authority of the Roman Pontiffs; besides that a higher relish for immorality and vice was diffused among all classes."

In the meantime the followers of Claude, Bishop of Turin, who has been called the first Protestant reformer, steadily increased and maintained in spite of the Church of Rome, the true doctrine of Christianity in the valleys of Piedmont. They were afterwards known as Waldenses and became so particularly obnoxious to the Pope that in 1204 the Inquisition was established to subdue them to the Catholic faith, or to ensure their ruin. Besides this, an immense army invaded the country of the Albigenses (a branch of the Waldenses), spreading fire and sword among them, so that not less than a million of whom, including those of the invaders, who were slain, most miserably perished in this period.

About the year 1378 wars broke out between the fac-

tions of the Popes Urban VI, elected at Rome, and Clement VII, elected at Avignon, in France. The dispute was as to which should be considered the true and lawful Pope. Multitudes lost their fortunes and their lives by these wars; Christianity was extinguished in most places, and profligacy rose to a scandalous excess. The clergy became excessively corrupt, and no longer seemed studious to observe the appearance of righteousness or decency.

In the 14th and 15th centuries three reformers, John Wickliffe and Lord Cobham, Englishmen, and one Jerome, of Prague, on account of their preaching and writing against the abuses of Popery, were burned at the stake and died martyrs to the cause of pure religion. The Catholic party also persecuted the United Brethren, who formed a system of Church government in more strict conformity to the Primitive Christians. These were compelled to leave their towns and villages in Bohemia and Moravia in the depth of winter. The sick were cast into the open fields. The public prisons were filled, and many were dragged at the tails of horses and carts, and quartered or burnt alive.

About the year 1487, Innocent VIII invested Albert, Archdeacon of Cremona, with power to persecute the Waldenses in the South of France, and in the valleys of Piedmont. This persecution was marked with the most savage barbarity. The Waldenses were driven from their homes into the mountains, but their hiding places were discovered, and four hundred children with their mothers were inhumanely suffocated. A greater number, to avoid suffocation, or being burnt to death, precipitated themselves headlong from their caverns upon the rocks below, where they were dashed in pieces; or, if any escaped

death by the fall, they were immediately slaughtered by the brutal soldierly.

In the year 1489, a Fransican Monk commenced a work of persecution in Fraissimere, which was extremely severe. Many were committed to prison and others burnt, without even the liberty of making an appeal. Whilst this persecution was going on in France, Albert, at the head of 18,000 soldiers, advanced against the valleys of Piedmont, which for many years were the theatre of savage barbarity and of intense suffering.

About the year 1524, the adherents of one Munzer, called Anabaptists, quarreled with the Reformers in Germany, which occasioned a war costing Germany fifty thousands of her citizens.

In the year 1546, that in which Luther died, the Roman Emperor proscribed the Protestants for not accepting the authority of the Council of Trent, which decreed *inter alia,* that the Holy Scriptures were not composed for the use of the people. An army was sent to subdue the Protestants, who defended themselves with great spirit, but were defeated with signal slaughter near Muhlberg.

"The loss which the Roman Church sustained by the Reformation was severely felt by her. Her gigantic power had been successfully attacked, and her widespread influence was narrowing down. Aware of this, the Roman Pontiffs now adopted every expedient by which their power might continue as it was. One of several plans adopted was their persecution of the Protestants. A full development of the calamities caused by the Papists, even in a single country, would greatly exceed our limits. We must content ourselves with observing, that scarcely a country, in which Protestants were to be

found, was exempted from their cruelties. During these persecutions, and the long wars which were engendered between Catholics and Protestants, it has been computed that not less than fifty millions of the latter, in one form or another, perished. The countries that suffered most severely were Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, France, parts of Germany, and England."

In England, during the reign of Charles I, the interests of the Papists were promoted by Doctor Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. Against the whole body of Non-Conformists, he exercised great severities. A volume would scarcely contain the story of Laud's cruelties.

Under such cruel treatment the Puritans would not live and many thousands migrated to America.

While affairs were in this unsettled state in England, a general insurrection of the Papists occurred in Ireland (23 Oct., 1641), which was followed by the massacre of more than 200,000 Protestants.

During the Protectorate of Cromwell, Presbyterianism was the established religion of the land, and then the Episcopal Clergy suffered their full share of oppression. Several thousands were ejected from their livings, and in not a few instances the bishops were shamefully abused.

At "the restoration," when Charles II became King, Episcopacy was re-established, and the observance of its forms most rigorously enforced. By the "Act of Uniformity" (24 August, 1662) more than two thousand Non-Conformist clergy were obliged to leave their congregations, and the sufferings of these ministers and their families are beyond description.

Under the "Conventicle Act," passed in 1664, the Non-Conformists suffered incalculable hardships. It has been computed that under the persecuting statutes against

Dissenters, during the reign of Charles II, and the short reign of James II, about 70,000 families of them were ruined in England, and about 8,000 persons perished in prison.

During the reign of Charles II, the Presbyterians of Scotland suffered even greater acts of severity than did the Non-Conformists in England. Gentlemen and peasants, and ministers, were driven out, to wander among the morasses and mountains of the country, and multitudes suffered torture and death. Rapes, robberies, and every species of outrage were committed by soldiers with impunity. The west of Scotland was red with the blood of its inhabitants, shed by their own countrymen.

It was during the period of the Wars of the Crusaders that the Jews in England were inhumanely persecuted. The origin may have been the envy and covetousness on the part of the nobles of the wealth accumulated by the Jews. But to obtain this wealth the Jews were cast into prison, tortured and massacred, and on the occasion of their defending themselves in York Castle, history records that the passions of the persecutors were "fanned into yet hotter flame by the clergy encouraging their mad fury or holy zeal, and promising salvation to all who shed the blood of a Jew."

On this occasion 500 Jews killed themselves rather than fall victims to an infuriated mob. Yet the Jews are, by the unanimous verdict of the historians and philosophers of our times, reckoned among the chief promoters of the development of humanity and civilization.

It would shock any Christian community at this date to hear of a conviction followed by the death penalty on a charge of witchcraft, as under the statute of Henry VI. Yet this was a form of religious persecution which

existed for a long time, and Barrington, in his observations on that statute, does not hesitate to estimate the numbers of those put to death in England on this charge at thirty thousand.

"The clergy continued, after the Reformation, to pursue these imaginary criminals with a zeal altogether deplorable."

But enough! Altho' this chapter contains but a brief outline of historical facts concerning the offences and crimes committed in the name of religion, it would be impossible, were it desirable, to narrate all the sufferings of humanity occasioned by religion and religious intolerance. The history of those who for a long period inflicted self-punishment as religious fanatics, reveals a shocking state of human depravity.*

Enough has been said, however, to shew that there must be something wrong in the principles of religion. since it has been the cause of men, who by reason of it, profess to be serving God, becoming such monsters of iniquity, and even lunatics, possessed of brutal propensities, wholly opposed to the nature of God and Christ.

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* See History of the Rod or Flagellation and the Flagellants, by the Rev. Wm. Cooper, B.A.—[W. Reeves, 83 Charring Cross Road, London.]

## CHAPTER IX.

### RELIGION AND THE CHURCH. CONTINUED.

*Their failure and the cause.*

"With gates of silver, and bars of gold
Ye have fenced my sheep from their Father's fold:
I have heard the dropping of their tears
In heaven these eighteen hundred years." [LOWELL.]

Altho', happily for mankind, the days of religious persecution, if not of religious intolerance, have in most civilized countries come to an end, religion and religious bigotry still offer great obstacles to the perfection of man in the ways of truth and righteousness. That there are many grave errors in religious belief existing; that men have not yet been brought to a true knowledge of God, His works and ways, and that some powerful influence is still overshadowing the truth of God's eternal plan concerning His Kingdom, is as certain as that there exists at the present time all over the civilized world, a great feeling of unrest, doubt, disquietude and disturbed and wavering belief concerning religious matters. Nor is this scepticism confined to the laity, but the clergy and ecclesiastical bodies, whose function it is to understand and teach these things, are equally affected by it.

As Marie Corelli says, "The shadow of a preponderating, defiant, all triumphant evil stalks abroad everywhere, and the clergy are as much affected by it as the laymen. I feel that the world is far more Christless today, after two thousand years of preaching and teaching, than it was in the time of Nero. How has this hap-

pened? Whose the fault? Walden, there is only one reply—it is the Church itself that has failed. The message of salvation; the gospel of love,—these are as God-born and true as ever they were, but the preachers and teachers of the divine creed are to blame,—the men who quarrel among themselves over forms and ceremonies, instead of concentrating their energies in ministering to others."

Marie Correlli writes what is only too true, and mankind will reap the benefit of her "God's Good Man." But there is more to be said, otherwise she could never have depicted John Walden, educated and nurtured in the lap of religion, as one whose good works were of far more benefit to mankind than his religious manifestations.

Wonderful, indeed, would it be, if righteousness, which endureth forever, which is the whole scheme of the Scriptures, and the paramount teaching of Christ leading to eternal life, did not occasionally exercise a purer and more benign influence over the minds of men than religion ever could or did,—a religion which, as Doctor Martineau declares, has become "so monstrous in its account of man, in its theory of God, in its picture of the Universe, in its distorted reflections of life and death, that if the belief in it were as real as the profession of it is loud, society would relapse into a moral and intellectual darkness it has long left, and the lowest element of modern civilization would be its faith."

But neither Marie Correlli, nor those within or without the church, who hold the same opinion, appear to have discovered the true cause why the churches have failed, or why religion itself is, and must always be, a failure.

True it is, that the substitution of religion as the creed or banner-cry of the churches, in the place of righteousness, has been a powerful factor in uniting those to whom religious power, pomp and place form the chief objects of their ambition, and given to men of all denominations an opportunity of neglecting the latter, whilst observing the former, under the influence of that indifference, manifested alike by those administering and those administered unto, as to whether Christianity is practised, so long as one professes to be a Christian and a member of some church; for it is a great temptation to man, requiring far less personal sacrifice and loss of reputation to be religious and feign righteousness, than to be righteous without professing religion.

The true cause, however, of the failure of religion and the churches, and why men have been groping in the dark so long, disputing with, quarreling, hating, fighting, torturing, killing and massacring their fellow-creatures in the name of religion, arises out of the fact that the Scriptures contain only admonitions against wrong-doing, and exhortations towards righteousness, causing men to mistake the means for the end, and to believe that the chief object of their creation and existence here is to make the Scriptures subject to themselves in order to qualify for a future state, instead of subjecting themselves to the Scriptures as a means of qualifying or enabling them to perform the purposes and object of their creation and sojourn upon the earth.

It is this error of belief, so simple, and yet so momentous in its consequences, that has caused men "to accept the whole Scripture on the external warrant of its divine authority, and to believe whatever is affirmed, and prac-

tise whatever is enjoined therein, without the right of appeal to their reasoning faculties or conscience."

It has prevented men from understanding the true character of God, as exemplified in the wonderful works of His creation.

It has limited man's knowledge of God to that of a Governor, whose only object is to see that his authority is exercised in enforcing obedience to his laws.

It has deprived men of the companionship and paternal love of their Heavenly Father, by creating a belief that they can do nothing of themselves to save their sinful natures from His wrath.

"How oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

It has hindered and obstructed men in acquiring a knowledge of themselves and of natural laws, and how to avoid the ills, diseases, calamities and disasters which arise from natural causes, by fostering the belief that these are the result of supernatural agency, or direct visitation from God, as a punishment for their sins.

It has prevented men from learning that Nature, in her own inexorable way, punishes them for every infringement of her laws; also that man's spiritual nature can be developed into perfection without supernatural means, and that he, who, more than any other, exemplified the divine nature in man, did so by the efficacy of natural law.

It has prevented men from perceiving "that the redeeming work of Christ made no demand on man, which human nature, kindled by the spirit of God, and dedicated to the love of man, was inadequate to render, and that it needed no agent superhuman or divine."

It has caused men to propound that most unwarrantable theory and most pernicious doctrine, that this superhuman power was exercised by the death and resurrection of Christ to save man from his sins, provided the sinner seeking redemption makes this his belief and confession. "Subjecting the generations of men," as Doctor Martineau says, "to vanity, entrapped in miserable self-deception, not of their own free will, but by reason of him, who hath subjected the same in hope, of what? of being delivered from their bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. It is difficult," he adds, "to give sacred aspect to this mere doing and undoing."

It has prevented men from believing that all the law and the Prophets hang on that simple message from God, so often repeated by the Prophets to the children of Israel, and so forcibly renewed and taught by Jesus of Gallilee, namely, that all our Heavenly Father requires of us, pleasing and gratifying to Him, is to love God, do His will, and love one another.

It has prevented men from believing and feeling that Christ preached and taught no other than this simple message of love and righteousness, and that long before He, or the Bible, was known to mankind, such men as Enoch, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job and others, walked with God, won His favor and entered into His kingdom through righteousness, without religion or religious doctrines.

It has kept men in ignorance of the true purposes for which they were endowed with life and faculties, and thus for ages hindered and obstructed the progress of man towards this end.

It has caused men to propound and teach theological

doctrines concerning the person and work of Christ, which have from time to time become active agencies in promoting religious strife, bigotry and intolerance, and which never could have exercised such a powerful influence over the minds of men, had they understood the true purpose of their creation, and not have mistaken the true object of the Scriptures.

It has also prevented men from learning that God does not require them to be righteous for His own sake; that all that we can do for the benefit of others, constituting righteousness, are but the exigencies of family or national life; that righteousness is only a relative virtue, being of no material benefit to the individual except in its relation to others; and that it is not the object, but only a necessary agency, to man's existence here as a social being.

Like as a building will not hold together without fixed rules or laws of construction, so neither can a family or nation live unitedly without those laws which govern the actions of men. But neither the necessity of the one or the other explains the purpose of the building, nor God's purpose in causing man to inhabit the earth.

Moreover, as no family or nation, most perfect in righteousness and all moral virtues, can subsist on these qualities alone, it is manifest that man was not placed on the earth for the purpose only of becoming perfect in righteousness, and therefore religion and righteousness are the means only to an end.

When this truth is understood and firmly established in the minds of men, and the day is not far distant when it will be, there will be a revolution in the thought and feelings of man towards his Maker and his fellow-man that will be the wonder of the whole world. There will

no longer be any mystery in godliness. The key is here. There will be no further conflict between religion and science. The one will be taken and the other left. Righteousness will again shine in all its ancient glory. The veil of the Temple will be rent. That which has been withheld from the wise and prudent will be revealed unto babes, and the people will be astonished at the power and love of God, and the wonderful simplicity of godliness.

No longer will men waste valuable time in theorizing about the person and work of Jesus, and of man's union with God, and in foolish disputations concerning theological doctrines known as orthodoxy. Once let men feel that they are on the right road to the Kingdom of God, and it will appear to them to be as unnecessary and foolish to be troubled with these religious questions as it would be to make a fire for the purpose only of heating the stove.

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" Come kingdom of our God !
And make the broad earth thine.
Stretch o'er her land and isle the rod
That flowers with grace divine.
Soon may all lands be blest
With fruit from life's glad tree,
And in its shade like brothers rest,
Sons of one family."

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END OF FIRST PART.

# THE TRUE OBJECT OF LIFE

## SECOND PART

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"What if earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein,
Each to other like more than on earth is thought."

[MILTON.]

"Earth shall live again, and like her sons
Have resurrection to a brighter being,
And waken like a bride; or like a morning
With a long blush of love to a new life:
Another race of souls shall rule in her,
Creatures all loving, beautiful and holy."

[P. J. BAILEY.]

# THE TRUE OBJECT OF LIFE

## SECOND PART

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

### CHAPTER I.

ARGUMENT.

*Object of life, to subdue the earth, etc.—Scriptural authority—Science the goal—Most sublime feature of creation—The Scriptures and Christianity the means only to this end.*

1. That we have not only direct Scriptural authority, nowhere contradicted by any divine agency, but there also exists the strongest possible proof from the light of nature, the constitution of man and the material world, that the Creator's purpose in placing man upon this earth was that he should "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and *subdue* it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."—(Gen. I., 28.)

2. That this purpose constitutes the main object of life; and subduing the earth means bringing all the hidden secrets and forces of Nature to light; discovering

the operation and effect of all natural laws; discovering and applying the use of all natural products for the benefit of mankind; or, in other words, the employment of our faculties in the investigation of natural phenomena, now treated and classified as the Sciences, namely, Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Physiology and Social Physics.

3. That man is amply endowed with faculties adapted for this purpose, and the fact that he was left to make these discoveries for himself has provided him with an occupation that is undoubtedly the most sublime feature of creation, for it not only offers the best source of individual happiness, whilst increasing the comfort and happiness of all mankind, but it also enables man by diligence and perseverance to approach, step by step, with every new discovery, unto the knowledge and power of God.*

4. That man was created to be a social being requiring the co-operation and assistance of his fellow in carrying out the object of his creation, in promoting the interest and happiness of mankind in general, and in protecting the lower animals and living creatures made subservient to his dominion and will.

5. That all written laws are but interpretations of the Natural law, commonly known as the unwritten or Moral law, and that if God revealed and caused to be promulgated certain ordinances or interpretations of natural law for the protection of life and property, and for the guidance and control of the actions and conduct of men toward each other, annexing thereto severe penalties for

* Lord Bacon, in his *Novum Organum*, frequently inculcates that knowledge and power are reciprocal; so that to improve in knowledge is to improve in the power of commanding nature.

their due observance, the most reasonable supposition is that He did so for the purpose of enabling men to dwell socially together in unity, and thus facilitate their carrying out the object of life, at a time when they had not sufficient knowledge and experience to legislate for themselves, and did not, as appears self-evident, understand and appreciate natural law.

6. That notwithstanding earlier stages of ignorance, man had from the beginning a mind and faculties constituted and adapted to perceive the superiority of the unwritten law or law of nature; and the men who made the best use of these faculties, in discovering and acting upon the principles underlying all revealed or written laws, were the most righteous and obedient children of God.

7. That the whole scheme of the Scriptures and of Christianity was to instruct man in the knowledge and love of God, and in righteousness, "that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works,"—not as the end or object of life, but as a means of effectuating the consummation of the wonderful results which God designed from the first, and created man capable of achieving, not only in subduing the earth, but what is of equal importance, in understanding and submitting himself to be governed by natural law.

8. That God is the only spirit; and as His spirit is everywhere, and in all created things, so is this world a spiritual world, but in no other sense, as there is no spiritual world for sentient beings here that is separate and apart from the natural world.

9. That notwithstanding God's almighty power, it pleases Him not to manifest His spirit in an arbitrary manner, but by predetermined, fixed and unalterable laws,—a regular order of causes and effects, which are

known as the laws of Nature; and men are mistaken who believe that God, even when the evil machinations of men were most vexatious, ever allowed His will to be affected by religious faith or observances, so as to cause Him to exercise some special supernatural power of interposition, by suspending or interfering with the due operation of natural law.

10. That the self-government of man, aided but not enforced by divine agency, does not in the least degree lessen the majesty, power or dignity of the Creator, and when better understood and appreciated will be seen to be founded on the highest wisdom for the benefit of man.

Lastly, that with the growth of knowledge, wisdom and love of God, if men will but earnestly and steadfastly seek a right understanding to enable them to live so as to please Him, man is capable of realizing, and will, agreeably to the Evolution-philosophy of Bishop Butler and Herbert Spencer, eventually realize "an ideal social state, where authority will be reduced to a minimum and liberty carried to the maximum; where evil and immorality will disappear," and man will understand, if he does not then actually realize, what is meant by being formed after the image of God, and also what Christ meant when He said, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE OBJECT OF LIFE.

*To discover what God has concealed—Strongest proof in the effect of its practical application—Further proof in the absence of revelation as to the operation and effect of all natural laws on which man's existence depends—No Scriptural authority per contra—Natural conclusions—Observations by Lord Bacon, Dr. Henry Morley and others.*

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"The main purpose of life is action and not quality, and though the manners of men spring from their qualities, their happiness or misery depends on their actions."—Aristotle.

"The end of life is not to do good; altho' many of us think so. It is not to win souls, altho' I once thought so. The end of life is to do the will of God."—Henry Drummond.

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of Kings to search out a matter."—Proverbs xxv., 2.

Whatever doubts may remain in the minds of men as to the waning influence and the comparative failure of religion and the churches, there can be no room for scepticism in this twentieth century regarding the success which has attended mankind in their efforts to multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it.

Indeed, were there no other evidence to corroborate the authority of the Scriptures as to the chief purpose

and object of life, we have the strongest proof of it in this well established fact, that notwithstanding the opposition of the churches, due to ecclesiastical bigotry and the false lights and shadows of the so-called spiritual world, the nations foremost in wisdom, righteousness, social progress, power, prosperity and contentment, are those which have devoted the greatest attention to this object, and have the fewest religious manifestations.

When it is considered what immense oceans separate and divide one portion of the earth from another, how each portion is peopled with different races of men, speaking different languages and having different climates and natural products; when, too, it is considered that man's physical and organic systems, and the organic system of all animate and inanimate creation, and all the forces of nature are subject to and controlled by fixed unalterable laws, so wonderful in their operation and effect for good or evil, according as they are understood, followed and observed, or misunderstood, neglected or ignored; and further, when it is considered what the earth and the waters are capable of producing, and the wonderful results of man's knowledge and industry in the use and application of these natural products for the benefit of mankind, so plainly visible in all parts of the inhabited globe; yet, since God left man to explore and discover for himself the different countries, the art of navigation, the means of communicating with other races, the causes, operation and effect of natural laws, and the use and application of natural products, and moreover endowed man with faculties admirably adapted for this purpose, can there be any doubt as to the true object and purpose for which man was created?

Yet the effect of religion and theological teaching have

caused men to entertain the belief that God created us for the purpose only of administering to what in man would be deemed to be the vanities of a supercillious nature, subjecting us to an everlasting abject condition of servility, for if the chief end of life is to glorify God in the manner interpreted by the churches, this is the condition to be effected by such an object.

But God did not create man for any selfish purpose of His own, nor can we glorify God except by doing His will. There is no authority from revelation or nature that God requires anything for His own sake from man, and this fact in conjunction with the freedom of man's will offers the strongest evidence of a divine purpose in leaving wholly to the voluntary act of man the offering to God of any direct homage or worship.

In the scheme of creation which we seek to establish, every manifestation of the Divine Will reveals to us a loving and benevolent Father who will be one with us if we seek Him aright; who has nothing in His character that we would not approve of in human nature, and who, in all that He has designed and contemplated in placing man upon this earth desires the benefit and happiness of mankind, having the effect of bringing our nature more in accord with His own, instead of keeping us for ever in a state of fear, where the only hope of salvation is in flattery, prayers and confessions..

The fact that nowhere is it revealed to man how the earth is to be subdued, whilst the whole scheme of the Scriptures is to instruct man in the way of righteousness only, may explain why it is that men have believed that the chief object of life is to be religious or to become righteous, but instead of this fact supporting such belief, it confirms our contention as to what God really intended

man's chief purpose to be. In the first place, all social progress and man's very existence being dependent on his having a knowledge of those things which God designedly left man to discover for himself, in the absence of any authority to the contrary, the strongest presumption is in favor of this work of discovery being the chief object for which man was created. Secondly, as men could not effectually accomplish this object without co-operation, nor until they could "dwell together in unity" under some form of moral government, if God at a time when men had not sufficient knowledge and experience to legislate for themselves, assisted them in the ways of righteousness by revelation, it shews how desirous He was and how important He considered it to be that men should be enabled to do His will and carry out the main object of life.

Another argument in favor of our proposition worthy of notice is this, that altho' man is left of himself to discover the modus operandi, there is positively nothing in the Scriptures which can in the slightest degree be construed as an intimation from God that carrying out this object is contrary to His will, or in any manner displeasing to Him, but, on the contrary, David, Solomon, and the peerless Job all bear witness that their highest conceptions of God were reached by a knowledge and contemplation of His wondrous works.

Nor is it an objection to this proposition that all men cannot be directly engaged in scientific pursuits, since all men are capable more or less of helping each other and of subduing themselves.

> "The man who turns the soil
> Need not have an earthy mind;
> The digger mid the coal

Need not be in spirit blind :
The mind can shed a light
On each worthy labor done,
As lowliest things are bright
In the radiance of the sun.
The workshop must be crowded
That the palace may be bright ;
If the ploughman did not plow
Then the poet could not write.
Then let every toil be hallow'd
That man performs for man,
And have its share of honor
As part of one great plan.
Till the earth becomes a Temple,
And every human heart
Shall join in one great service,
Each happy in his part."

Nor is it necessary or expected that all men should have equal opportunities or equal capabilities, for there is not in the proposition any implied obligation to do, nor any threatened future punishment for omitting or neglecting to make any particular discovery or invention. Altho' just as certain as those are rewarded with the highest honors, riches and happiness, who make the best use of their faculties in this direction for the benefit of others, these are indirectly punished who suffer all the ills which idleness, poverty and indifference to the purposes of life produce.

"The introduction of noble discoveries seems to hold by far the highest place among human actions; and such was the judgment of ancient times. For to inventors they paid divine honors, while to those who did good service in civil affairs (such as founders of cities and empires, law-givers, men who freed their country from lasting evils, overthrowers of tyrannies, and the like) they only

decreed the rank of heroes. And certainly, if we rightly compare these things, we shall find that this judgment of antiquity is just. For whereas the benefits arising from discoveries may extend to the whole human race, those of a civil nature affect only certain settlements of men; the latter, too, do not last beyond a few ages, the former, as it were, forever. Besides a civil reformation is seldom unaccompanied by violence and disturbance, but discoveries diffuse blessings and confer benefits without injury or sorrow to anyone. Again, discoveries are, as it were, new creations and imitations of God's works; and it seems worthy of notice in Solomon, that whilst he was flourishing in power, wealth, the magnificence of his works, his attendants, his household, and his fleet—he chose none of those things as his glory, but declared that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of kings to search out a matter." (Prov. xxv., 2.)

Again, let any one consider, if he pleases, how great a difference there is between the life of men in the most civilized part of Europe and in the wildest and most barbarous regions of new India; he will think the difference so great as to justify the saying, "Man is a God to man," not only in regard of age and advantages, but also from a comparison of conditions. And this superiority is the result, not of soil, nor of climate, nor of bodies, but of arts.

"Again, it is well to mark the force, virtue and consequences of discoveries; and these occur nowhere more manifestly than in those which were unknown to the ancients, and whose origin, tho' recent, is obscure and inglorious; the arts, namely, of printing, of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass. For these three have changed

the face and conditions of things all over the world; the first in letters, the second in war, and the third in navigation. And hence numberless changes have followed; so that no government, no sect, no star, seems to have exercised greater power and influence over human affairs than these mechanical discoveries.

"Besides, it will not be amiss to distinguish the three kinds, and, as it were, degrees of human ambition. The first is that of those who wish to increase their own influence in their country; and this is a common and degenerate kind. The second, that of those who strive to enlarge the influence and power of their country among the human race; this kind is more dignified, but not less covetous. But when a man endeavors to restore and increase the power and influence of the human race itself over the universe, his is, without doubt, an ambition (if such it may be called) at once sounder and grander than the rest. Now the empire of man over things is founded on the Arts and Sciences alone, for Nature is only governed by obeying her."—Lord Bacon.

"For we are building in the human intellect a copy of the universe, such as it is discovered to be, and not as man's own reason would have ordered it. Now this cannot be accomplished without a very diligent dissection and anatomy of the universe, but we declare that those foolish models and apish imitations of the world which the fancies of men have woven in their philosophies must be utterly given to the winds. Therefore, let all men know how much difference there is between the idola of the human mind and the Ideas of the Divine."—Lord Bacon.

"Not all the winds and storms and earthquakes and seas, and seasons of the world have done so much to rev-

olutionize the world as man has done since the day he came forth upon it, and received, as he is most truly declared to have done, dominion over it."—Bushnell.

"Action is at once the destiny and the lot of man. All the conditions of his existence are framed upon the supposition of his activity."—Punshon.

"The ever-working Deity created man for action, and made his success in life to depend upon his personal efforts; hence inaction is opposed alike to God's design and man's prosperity."—E. Davies.

"By the universal consent of all wise men it is acknowledged that the Almighty Creator made man to serve Him, and to set forth His glory in a more illustrious manner by improving the good things committed to his trust."—Puffendorff.

> "What is man,
> If his chief good and market of his time
> Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
> Sure, He who made us with such large discourse
> Looking before and after, gives us not
> That capability and godlike reason
> To rust in us unused." [SHAKESPEARE.]

"But the earth was given us to till, not only with the plough and spade. All knowledge and wisdom of man is quarried out of the surrounding world, when we apply the minds God gave us to the traces of His wisdom with which we are surrounded. The laws of nature which we seek to find are parts of the Divine wisdom which can be variously applied to our well-being when they have been discovered and made part of human knowledge. Bridge, mine or tower, steam engine or telescope, every work of applied science has this source. There is a revelation also in nature, as Richard Hooker, on behalf of the

Church, wisely told those who descried the use of reason. The great harmonies of nature yield us knowledge fruitful towards the development of man. Not to enquire, is not to obey the will of the Creator, is to refuse submission to the hand of God, who also in this way shapes us to His image."—Henry Morley, LL.D.

"His Royal Highness the late Prince Albert is reported to have expressed the opinion that 'man is approaching a more complete fulfilment of that great and sacred mission which he has to perform in the world. His reason being created after the image of God, he has to use it to discover the laws by which the Almighty governs his creation; and, by making these laws his standard of action, to conquer nature to his use—himself a divine instrument. Science discovers these laws of power, motion, and transformation; industry applies them to the raw matter which the earth yields us in abundance, but which becomes valuable only by knowledge; art teaches us the immutable laws of beauty and symmetry, and gives to us productive forms in accordance with them."

"For direct self-preservation, or the maintenance of life and health, the all-important knowledge is Science; for that indirect self-preservation which we call gaining a livelihood, the knowledge of greatest value is Science. For the due discharge of parental functions, the proper guidance is to be found only in Science. For that interpretation of national life, past and present, without which the citizen cannot rightly regulate his conduct, the indispensable key is Science. Alike for the most perfect production and highest enjoyment of art in all its forms, the needful preparation is Science. And for the purposes of discipline—intellectual, moral, religious—the most efficient study is Science.'—Herbert Spencer.

"Twin sister of natural and revealed religion and of heavenly birth, Science will never belie her celestial origin, nor cease to sympathize with all that emanates from the same pure home. Human ignorance and prejudice may for a time seem to have divorced what God hath joined together, but human ignorance and prejudice shall at length pass away; then science and religion shall be seen blending their parti-colored rays into one beautiful bow of light, linking heaven to earth, and earth to heaven."—Prof. Hitchcock.

"For He hath given me certain knowledge of the things that are, namely, to know how the world was made, and the operation of the elements; the beginning, ending and midst of the times; the alterations of the turning of the sun, and the change of seasons; the circuits of years, and the position of stars; the nature of living creatures, and the furies of wild beasts; the violence of winds and the reasonings of men, the diversities of plants and the virtue of roots; and all such things as are either secret or manifest, them I know."—Wisdom of Solomon.

## CHAPTER III.

### "KNOW THYSELF."

*Man's highest practical idealism realised in pursuing the true object of life—The faculties of Discovery and Invention—Misdirected Faculties—Value and delight of Labor—Opposite effects of indolence.*

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"For the works of the Lord are wonderful and His works among men are hidden."—Eccles. xi. 4.

"He hath given men skill, that He might be honored in His marvellous works."—Eccles xxviii., 6.

Whatever duty God has imposed on man, it is imperative that man should perform, and as subduing the earth includes the subjugation of himself, the highest, noblest, grandest, most important and most wonderful object of creation, and as it is also manifest that man cannot understand God, His works and ways, nor exercise that dominion which God has entrusted to him, without first accomplishing this task, it follows that the first and most important part of man's duty is to understand and know himself, his constitution and nature.

The Ancient Greeks so well understood the importance of this precept *"Know Thyself,"* that they inscribed it over the portico of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. Manander describes this precept as meaning, "that thou get acquainted with thy own abilities, and with what thou art capable of accomplishing"; and according to Plutarch it was considered divine.

By the ancient and learned Brahmins it was thus expressed:

"Commune with thyself, O man, and consider wherefore thou wast made. Contemplate thy powers, thy wants and thy connexions, so that thou shalt discover the duties of life and be directed in all thy ways."

"Know thyself, then, the pride of His creation, the link uniting divinity and matter. Behold a part of God within thee; remember thine own dignity, nor dare to descend into evil."

And in Pope's "Essay on Man" the same precept is thus forcibly expressed:

> "Know thyself, presume not God to scan,
> The proper study of mankind is man.
> Of man, what see we but his station here,
> From what to reason, or to which refer."

"Man obviously stands pre-eminent among sublunary objects and is distinguished by remarkable endowments above all other terrestrial beings. Nevertheless no creature presents such anomalous appearances as man. Viewed in one respect he resembles a demon; in another, he almost appears as the image of God. Seen in his crimes, his wars and his devastations, he might be mistaken for the incarnation of an evil spirit; contemplated in his schemes of charity, his discoveries in science, and his vast combinations for the benefit of his race, he seems a bright intelligence from heaven."—Combe.

"But thou, O man! God hath distinguished with peculiar favor, and exalted thy station above all creatures. He hath endowed thee with reason to maintain thy dominion. He hath fitted thee with language to improve by society; and exalteth thy mind with the powers of meditation to contemplate and adore His inscrutable perfections. And in the laws He hath ordained as the rule

of thy life, so kindly hath He suited thy duty to thy nature, that obedience to His precepts is happiness to thyself."—From Ancient Bramin.

"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and motion how express and admirable ; in action how like an angel ; in apprehension, how like a God!"—Shakespeare.

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands ; thou hast put all things under his feet."—Psalms viii. 5-6.

"The Lord created man of the earth according to His image, and gave him dominion over beasts and fowls ; counsel, and a tongue, and eyes, ears and a heart gave He them to understand. Withal He filled them with the knowledge of understanding and shewed them good and evil. He gave them to glory in His marvellous acts for ever, *that they might declare His works with understanding.* Beside this He gave them knowledge and the law of life for an heritage."—Eccles. vii.

If we take a brief view of the constitution of man we shall find, that in order to maintain life, it is absolutely necessary that he should have proper care and attention during childhood, and at all times food, clothing and protection, and that he is wholly dependent on the products of the soil to provide him with these necessaries.

Yet, altho' the earth is capable of yielding an ample supply of everything necessary to meet the physical requirements of man and to satisfy his loftiest aspirations. he has to discover for himself the composition, character, chemical properties of, and laws governing all natural production ; to discover and select such as can be used for food, raiment and shelter; and how these can be cul-

tivated, produced and applied to his use. He has also to discover for himself how to subdue the earth, and carry out the object of his creation; his relation to God and his fellow men; and the necessity of submitting to and being governed by natural laws, physical and moral, so that men can preserve life and dwell socially and with peace and goodwill together.

God, however, has endowed man with intellectual faculties admirably adapted for all these purposes, and the only conditions imposed on him are, first, that he must work,—work to acquire knowledge and wisdom, work to produce, work to subdue the earth and to be able to exercise as a responsible being that dominion over all other living creatures which is entrusted to him, and also to enable him to apply natural products and the products of his labor to the best advantage in providing for his wants and projects of his ambition. And secondly, that out of love and obedience to his Creator, he is faithful, just and loving to his fellow-man.

And what is more particularly noteworthy is the harmony and wisdom that prevails in the construction and operation of this scheme, for, in the development and exercise of the faculties ; in work and labor ; in the acquirement of knowledge and wisdom ; in the subjugation of the earth ; and in exercising dominion over the lower objects of God's creation, man is enabled to do so and improve his physical and spiritual nature under conditions which afford him the greatest sources of pleasure and happiness. Moreover, it not only brings man into closer touch and communion with and increases his knowledge and love of God, but it also makes him more loving, benevolent, compassionate and charitable towards his fellow-man and the creatures subservient to his will.

"If the world is an institution, and mans faculties are adapted to it, there must be divinely appointed ways of gratifying these powers : and the corollary seems evident that man must be capable of finding them out and complying with their requirements, when he shall seriously employ his endowments to this end."—George Combe.

"Altho' thou art not able to see the mind of man, as thou seest not God, yet as thou recognized God from His works, so thou must acknowledge the divine power of the mind from its recollection of past events, its power of invention, from its rapidity of movement, and the desire it has for the beautiful."—Cicero.

"It was the act of a lofty spirit to examine the hidden places of the nature of things, and not content with their exterior, to look into, and descend into, the deep things of God."—Seneca.

"The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—Cor. II., 10.

"Now the more gifts God has bestowed on man, and the greater enlargements He has granted to his wit and mind, the more base and unseemly would it be that all these noble endowments should rust for want of culture and regulation, should be vainly spent and squandered away without use, without order and without grace. Nor was it altogether in vain that God endowed man with a mind apprehensive of accuracy and of decency, but it was without doubt intended that he should so employ the powers he had received as to manifest the glory of his Creator and to promote his own true interests and happiness."—Puffendorf.

"For whoever is acquainted with his own mind will, in the first place, feel that he has a divine principle within him and will regard his rational faculties as something

sacred and holy ; he will always both think and act in a way worthy of so great a gift, and when he shall have proved and thoroughly examined himself, he will perceive how well furnished by nature he has come into life, and what noble instruments he possesses to obtain and secure wisdom.—Cicero.

" What know we of the God of nature (we speak only of natural means) except thro' the faculties He has given us rightly employed on the materials around us? In this way we rise to a conception of material inorganic laws, in beautiful harmony and adjustment ; and they suggest to us the conception of infinite power and wisdom. In like manner we rise to a conception of organic laws—of means (often most purely mechanical, as they seem to us, and their organic functions well comprehended) adapted to an end—and that end the well-being of a creature endowed with sensation and volition. Thus we rise to a conception both of Divine power and Divine goodness ; and we are constrained to believe, not merely that all natural law is subordinate to His will, but that He has also (in a way He allows us to see His works) so exhibited the attributes of His will as to shew Himself in the mind of man as a personal and superintending God, concentrating His will on every atom of the universe."—Professor Sedgwick.

" Not only is man really benefited by the arrangement which leaves him to discover the natural laws for himself, altho', during the period of his ignorance he suffers much evil from want of acquaintance with them ; but the progress which he has already made towards knowledge and happiness must, from the very extent of his experience, *be actually greater* than can at present be perceived. Its extent will become more obvious, and his experience

itself more valuable, after he has obtained a view of the true theory of his constitution. He will find that past miseries have at least exhausted numerous errors, and he will know how to avoid thousands of paths that lead to pain ; in short, he will then discover that errors in conduct, like errors in philosophy, give additional importance and practicalness to truth, by the demonstration which they afford of the evils attending departures from its dictates."—Combe.

"Nothing can fill, much less extend, the soul of man but God, and the contemplation of God; and therefore Solomon, speaking of the two principal senses, the eye and ear, affirmeth that the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing; and if there be no fulness, then is the continent greater than the content; so of knowledge itself, and the mind of man, whereto the senses are but reporters, he defineth likewise in these words, placed after that calendar or ephemerides, which he maketh of the diversities of times and seasons for all actions and purposes ; and concludeth thus, 'God hath made all things beautiful, or decent, in the true return of their seasons. Also he hath placed the world in man's heart, yet cannot man find out the work which God worketh from the beginning to the end' ; declaring, not obscurely, that God hath framed the mind of man as a mirror, or glass, capable of the image of the universal world, and joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light; and not only delighted in beholding the variety of things and vicissitude of times, but raised also to find out and discern the ordinances and decrees, which throughout all those changes are infallibly observed. And altho' he doth insinuate that the supreme or summary law of nature, which he calleth 'The

work which God worketh from the beginning to the end, is not possible to be found out by man'; yet that doth not derogate from the capacity of the mind, but may be referred to the impediments, as of shortness of life, ill conjunction of labors, ill tradition of knowledge over from hand to hand, and many other inconveniences wherewith the condition of man is subject. For that nothing parcel of the world is denied to man's inquiry and invention, he doth in another place rule over, when he saith, 'The spirit of man is as the lamp of God, wherewith he searcheth the inwardness of all secrets.'"—Bacon.

Considering what man has already accomplished in subduing the earth, there can be no question about his being endowed with faculties necessary for this purpose. It is worthy of particular notice, however, as regards the faculties of discovery and invention, that if the Creator's design was to hide what it is man's chief purpose to find, not only do the development and exercise of these faculties in a remarkable way shew how admirably man is constituted for the object of his creation, but they also offer to him one of his greatest sources of pleasure, especially noticeable as regards discovery, at the earliest stages of development, for who has not observed with what intense delight and interest little children play the game of "Hide and go seek"?

"God has annexed a secret pleasure to the idea of anything that is new or uncommon, that He might encourage us in the pursuit after knowledge, and engage us to search into the wonders of His creation; for every new idea brings such a pleasure with it, as rewards any pains we have taken in its acquisition, and consequently serves as a motive to put us upon fresh discoveries."—Addison.

"Imitation is natural to man from his infancy. He acquires his rudiments of knowledge in this way ; besides the delight in it is universal."—Aristotle.

There is reason to believe that habitual thieving can be traced to the misdirection of the inherent faculty of acquisitiveness, through a lack of encouragement to labor and a consequent growing dislike to it. Let a child feel the importance of ownership of property, that he has expended labor in making or acquiring, and he will soon learn to appreciate the rights of others. Some day, too, it may be proved that the almost universal spirit of gambling in man is but a misdirection of a natural faculty of discovery, which if our plan of the universe is the correct one, ought to be inherent in every man.

The gambler is generally possessed of intellectual ability, and if, as it would appear, that the alluring element is curiosity as to his ability to realize actuality from possibility, what a vast gain to humanity it would be were this faculty properly directed by a labor of love in the pursuit of new inventions and discoveries useful to mankind.

"If many useful discoveries have been made by chance, as it were, or through the force of circumstances, by men who were not looking for them, or who were engaged on other pursuits, no one can doubt that if the same men do look for them, and make it their business to do so after a fixed method and order, and not by desultory impulses, they must necessarily discover much more."—Lord Bacon.

LABOR.

"Labor is the destiny of humanity."—Lord Stanley.

"Labor is life; from the inmost heart of the worker

rises the God-given force, the sacred celestial life essence breathed into him by Almighty God."—Carlyle.

"The fruit derived from labor is the sweetest of all pleasures."—Vauvenargues.

"Of the laws of nature, on which the condition of man depends, that which is attended with the greatest number of consequences is the necessity of labor for obtaining the means of subsistence, as well as the means of the greatest part of our pleasures. This is, no doubt, the primary cause of government, for, if nature had produced spontaneously all the objects which we desire, and in sufficient abundance for the desires of all, there would have been no source of dispute or of injury among men ; nor would any man have possessed the means of ever acquiring authority over another."—J. Mill.

"Weave, brothers, weave ! Toil is ours ;
But toil is the lot of man ;
One gathers the fruit, one gathers the flowers,
One seweth the seed again !
There is not a creature, from England's king
To the peasant that delves the soil,
That knows half the pleasure the seasons bring,
If he have not his share of toil."

[W. A. Proctor.]

"All that thou seekest may be found if thou shrinkest not nor fliest from labor. For since some have discovered things in heaven, tho' they are far removed, such as the rising and setting of the stars, the solstices and eclipses of the sun, what common things that are connected with man here below should be able to escape his search?"—Alexis, B. C, 356.

"Work, for it is a noble thing,
With a worthy end in view ;

To tread the path that God ordains
With steadfast heart and true,
That will not quail, whate'er betide,
But bravely bear us through.

"It matters not what the sphere may be
That we are here to fill;
How much there is of seeming good,
How much of seeming ill;
'Tis ours to bend the energies,
And consecrate the will." [MARTIN LAWS.]

"If it were not for labor, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful, nor so useful, so strong, nor so patient, so noble, nor so untempted."—Bishop Taylor.

"Ho! all who labor—all who strive—
Ye wield a lofty power.
Do with your might, do with your strength,
Fill every golden hour!
The glorious privilege to do
Is man's most noble dower.
Oh! to your birthright and yourselves
To your own-selves be true!
A weary, wretched life is theirs
Who have no work to do."

[CAROLINE F. ORME.]

On the other hand, "Idleness is the key of beggary and the root of all evil."—Spurgeon.

"Whereas, Satan's greatest business is to tempt other men, the idle man's business is to tempt Satan."—Saunderson.

"From its very inaction, idleness ultimately becomes the most active cause of evil; as palsy is more to be dreaded than a fever."—Colton.

"In idleness there is perpetual despair."—Carlyle.

"Idleness is the mother of unquietness, disorder and curiosity ; sacrilegious in religion, dangerous in science, damnable as to future things, seditious in affairs of state, contrary to the quiet of families, and shameful and infamous to those who are possessed with it."—Sir J. Beaumont.

"If you ask me which is the real hereditary sin of human nature, do you imagine I shall answer pride, or luxury, or ambition, or egotism? No; I shall say *indolence.* He who conquers indolence will conquer almost anything."—Lavater.

"A slothful man is compared to a filthy stone, and every one will hiss him out of his disgrace."—Eccles, xxii., 1.

## CHAPTER IV

### WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE.

*Relation of to the Object of Life—Acquisition of Necessary, but productive of man's greatest happiness.*

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"Wisdom is the principal thing ; therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding."—Prov. iv., 7.

We have seen the necessity of acquiring knowledge. If, however, man is desirous of attaining to the highest state of perfection, and reaching, as he is capable of doing, the fullest effect of the Divine nature within him, he must also acquire wisdom. Wisdom is superior to knowledge, because it is the knowing how knowledge should be applied, so as to be pleasing to God and a benefit to mankind.

"The pleasure and delight of knowledge far surpasseth all other in nature. We see in all other pleasures there is satiety, and after they be used, their verdure departeth—which sheweth well that they be but deceits of pleasure, and not pleasures ; and that it was the novelty which pleased, not the quality ; and therefore we see that voluptuous men turn friars, and ambitious princes turn melancholy. But of knowledge there is no satiety, but satisfaction and appetite are perpetually interchangeable."

"To say that a blind custom of obedience should be a surer obligation than duty taught and understood, is to affirm that a blind man may tread surer by a guide than

a seeing man can by a light. And it is without all controversy that learning doth make the minds of men gentle, generous, maniable and pliant to government; whereas ignorance makes them churlish, thwarting and mutinous; and the evidence of time doth clear this assertion, considering that the most barbarous, rude and unlearned times have been most subject to tumults, seditions and changes."

"The commandment of knowledge is yet higher than the commandment over the will; for it is a commandment over the reason, belief and understanding of man, which is the highest part of the mind, and giveth law to the will itself: for there is no power on earth which setteth up a throne, or chair of state, in the spirits and souls of men, and in their cogitations, imaginations, opinions and beliefs, but knowledge and learning. And therefore we see the detestable and extreme pleasure that arch-heretics and false prophets are transported with, when they once find in themselves that they have a superiority in the faith and consciences of men; so great, as, if they have once tasted of it, it is seldom seen that any torture or persecution can make them relinquish or abandon it. But as this is that which the author of the "Revelation" calleth "the depth" or profoundness "of Satan," so, by argument of contraries, the just and lawful sovereignty over men's understanding, by force of truth rightly interpreted, is that which approacheth nearest to the similitude of the Divine rule."—Lord Bacon.

"For such the bounteous providence of Heaven,
In every breast implanting the desire
Of objects new and strange, to urge us on
With unremitted labor to pursue
Those sacred stores, that wait the repining soul
In truth's exhaustless bosom. [AKENSIDE.]

"The love of knowledge comes with reading and grows upon it. And the love of knowledge, in a young mind, is almost a warrant against the inferior excitement of passions and vices."—H. W. Beecher.

"Nothing can be more important to the welfare of a community than the wide extension of rational curiosity in the desire of knowledge; it not only increases the comforts, enlivens the feelings and improves the faculties of man, but it forms the firmest barrier against the love of pleasure, and stops the progress of corruption."—S. Smith.

"Virtue and knowledge are endowments greater than nobleness and riches."—Shakespeare.

"Knowledge is like the mystic ladder in the Patriarch's dream. Its base rests on the primeval earth—its crest is lost in the shadowy splendor of the empyrean; while the great authors who for traditionary ages have held the chain of science and philosophy of poesy and erudition, are the angels ascending and descending the sacred scale, and maintaining, as it were, the communication between earth and heaven."—Lord Beaconsfield.

"'The struggle after learning is full of delight. The intellectual chase, not less than the material one, brings fresh vigour to our pulses, and infinite palpitations of strange and sweet suspense. The idea that is gained with effort affords far greater satisfaction than that which is acquired with dangerous facility. We dwell with more fondness on the perfume of the flower that we have ourselves tended than on the odour which we cull with carelessness and cast away without remorse. The strength and sweetness of our knowledge depend upon the impression which it makes upon our own minds. It is the liveliness of the ideas that it affords which renders re-

search so fascinating ; so that a trifling fact or deduction, when discovered or worked out by our own brain, affords us infinitely greater pleasure than a more important truth obtained by the exertions of others."—C. Fleming.

"Knowledge of the electric telegraph saves time ; knowledge of writing saves human speech and locomotion ; knowledge of domestic economy saves income ; knowledge of sanitary laws saves health and life ; knowledge of the laws of the intellect saves wear and tear of the brain ; and knowledge of the laws of the spirit—what does it not save?"—Kingsley.

"But what is there, I will not say in man, but in all heaven and earth, more divine than reason? which, when it has arrived at maturity, is properly termed wisdom."—Cicero.

"Wisdom is glorious and never fadeth away ; yea, she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her.

"She is a treasure unto men that never faileth ; which they that use become the friends of God, being commended for the gifts which come from learning.

"She is the brightness of the everlasting spirit, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness.

"God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom.

"She is privy to the mysteries of the knowledge of God and a lover of His works.

"What is richer than wisdom, that worketh all things ? Who of all that are is a more cunning workman than she? She teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude. She knoweth things of old. She knoweth the subtilities of speeches, and can expound dark sentences.

She foreseeth signs and wonders and the events of seasons and times."—Wisdom of Solomon.

"Wisdom raineth down skill and knowledge of understanding and exalteth them to honor who hold her fast.

"Search and seek and she shall be made known unto thee.

"Wisdom lifteth up the head of him that is of low degree and maketh him to sit among great men.

"Wisdom, knowledge and understanding are of the Lord.

"Blessed is the man that doth meditate good things in wisdom and that reasoneth of holy things by his understanding. He that considereth her ways in his heart shall also have understanding in her secrets."—Ecclesiasticus.

"Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace."—Prov. iii., 17.

## CHAPTER V.

### NATURE.

*The importance and delight of studying.*

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork.—Ps. xix. 1.

"For thou Lord hast made me glad through thy works, I will triumph in the works of thy hands. O Lord, how great are thy works, and thy thoughts are very deep."—Ps. xcii. 4-5.

"The chief business of mankind is to study the order of nature and govern themselves accordingly. You can have no better ideal than the study of the beautiful and wonderful adaptations of Nature, as strikingly witnessed in human beings, in animals and plants, and in every phase of creation. Such a culture will give scope, object and beauty to life, and raise the soul above petty things that the daily routine of life is apt to bind us to. We must examine things; their beauties will repay us by and from the unity of plan, evidence of design, grandeur of conception, studying life through the great variety of species, from its most minute form to man, that wondrous specimen of an "intelligent being with a will." All will support and strengthen our belief in the existence of a creator, and increase our faith in his guidance, as no matter when or what we investigate, the delicate adjustments of the many different parts of life and locomotion, the wondrous circulating and nervous system, the adaptability everywhere of nutritious substances according to

the varied climates for the support of man and animals, all tend to prove that throughout creation is to be found that first law of beauty, a "perfect fitness," and an uniformity of plan and unity of life in the animal kingdom, in the many amplifications existing for the convenience of all animals, whether living on the earth, or in the water."

> "First follow nature and your judgment frame
> By her just standard, which is still the same:
> Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,
> One clear, unchanged, and universal light.
> Life, force and beauty, must to all impart,
> At once the source, and end, and test of art.
> Art from that fund each just supply provides,
> Works without show and without pomp presides:
> In some fair body thus the informing soul
> With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole.
> Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains;
> Itself unseen, but in the effects remains." [POPE]

"The first end to which all wisdom and knowledge ought to be employed, is to illustrate the wisdom or goodness of the Father of Nature. Every science that is cultivated by men leads naturally to religious thought, from the study of the plant that grows beneath our feet, to that of the Host of Heaven above us, who perform their stated revolutions in majestic silence amid the expanse of infinity. It is not the lifeless mass of matter he will then feel that he is examining, it is the mighty machine of Eternal Wisdom, the workmanship of Him "in whom everything lives and moves, and has its being." Under an aspect of this kind, it is impossible to pursue knowledge without mingling with it the most elevated sentiments of devotion, it is impossible to perceive the laws of nature, without perceiving at the same time, the presence and Providence of the law-giver; and thus it is, that in

every age, the evidences of religion have advanced with the progress of true philosophy; and that science in erecting a monument to herself, has, at the same time, erected an altar to the Deity. The knowledge of nature is not exhausted. There are many great discoveries yet awaiting the labors of science; and with them, there is also awaiting to humanity many additional proofs of the wisdom and benevolence of "Him who made us." He who can trace any new fact, or who can exemplify any one new instance of divine wisdom or benevolence in the system of nature has not lived in vain. He, in whatever situation he may be, who, in the study of science, has discovered a new means of alleviating pain, or of remedying disease; who has discovered a wiser method of preventing poverty, or of shielding misfortune; who has suggested additional means of increasing or improving the beneficent productions of nature, has left a memorial of himself which can never be forgotten; which will communicate happiness to ages yet unborn, and which in the emphatic language of scripture, renders him a "fellow-worker with God himself, in the improvement of his creation."—W. Shaler.

"To man the voice of nature spake—
Go, from the creatures, thy instructions take:
Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;
Learn from the beast the physic of the field:
Thy arts of building from the bee receive;
Learn of the mole to plough, the worm to weave;
Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
There too all forms of social union find,
And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind:
Here subterranean works and cities see;
Here towns aerial on the waving tree;
Learn each small people's genius, policies,

The ants' republic and the realm of bees;
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know;
And these for ever, tho' a monarch reign,
Their separate cells and properties maintain."

[POPE.]

"A wise man is never so busy as in the solitary contemplation of God and the works of nature. He withdraws himself to attend the service of future ages; and those counsels which he finds salutary to himself he commits to writing for the good of after-times, as we do the receipts of sovereign antidotes or balsams. He that is well employed in this study, though he may seem to do nothing at all, does the grandest things yet of all others in affairs both human and divine."—Seneca.

"O Nature! all sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!
Snatch me to heaven; Thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent,
Profusely scattered o'er the void immense,
Shew me; their motions, periods and their laws,
Give me to scan; thro' the disclosing deep,
Light my blind way; the mineral strata there;
Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world;
O'er that the rising system more complex,
Of animals; and higher still the mind,
The varied scene of quick compounded thought,
And where the mixing passions endless shift;
These ever open to my ravished eye;
A search, the flight of time can n'er exhaust!
But if to that unequal; if the blood,
In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
That best ambition; under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook
And whisper to my dreams. From Thee, begin,
Dwell all on Thee, with Thee conclude my song;
And let me never, never stray from Thee."

[JAMES THOMPSON.]

"When we are contemplating and pondering on the works of nature, we are supplying, as it were, its natural food to the mind: our thoughts assume a loftier character, and we learn to look down on what is human; while we meditate on the vault of heaven above, our own affairs appear petty and contemptible; our minds derive delight from what is so sublime and inscrutable."—Cicero.

"'Tis born of all; the love of Nature's works
Is an ingredient in the compound man,
Infused at the creation of the kind.
And, tho' the Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each, by strokes
And touches of His hand, with so much art
Diversified, that two were never found
Twins at all points—Yet this obtains in all
That all discern a beauty in His works."

[Cowper.]

"The observation of the calm energetic regularity of Nature, the immense scale of her operations, and the certainty with which her ends are attained tends irresistibly to tranquillize and reassure the mind, and renders it less accessible to repining and turbulent emotions. And this it does, not by debasing our nature into weak compliances, but by fitting us as from an inward spring with a sense of nobleness and power, which enables us to rise superior to them, by shewing us our strength and innate dignity, and by calling upon us for the exercise of those powers and faculties by which we are susceptible of the comprehension of so much greatness, and which form, as it were, a link between ourselves and the best and noblest benefactors of our species, with whom we hold communion in thoughts, and participate in discoveries, which have raised them above their fellow mortals and brought them nearer to their creator."—Herschel.

"If thau art worn and hard beset
With sorrows that thou would'st forget;
If thou would'st read a lesson that will keep
The heart from fainting, and the soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! No tears
Dim the sweet look that nature wears."

[LONGFELLOW,]

"The noblest employment of the mind of man is the study of the works of his creator. To him whom the science of nature delighteth every object bringeth a proof of his God; and everything that proveth this giveth cause of adoration. His mind is lifted up to heaven every moment; his life is one continued act of devotion.

"Look down upon the earth, and see her produce; examine her bowels and behold what they contain; hath not wisdom and power ordained the whole?

"Thou who seest the whole as admirable as its parts, canst thou better employ thine eye than in tracing out thy creator's greatness in them—thy mind than in examining their wonders? What is the study of words compared with this? Wherein is knowledge but in the study of nature? When thou hast adored the fabric inquire into its use; for know, the earth produces nothing but may be good to thee; are not food and raiment and the remedies for thy diseases all derived from the earth alone? Piety to thy God, and benevolence to thy fellow creatures, are they not thy great duties? What shall teach thee the one, or what shall inform thee of the other, like unto the study of His works?"—Ancient Bramin.

"For look now around, then on the Universe, behold how all things serve thee;
The teeming soil, and the buoyant sea, and the undulating air;
Golden crops, and blooming fruits and flowers and precious gems,
Choice perfumes, and fair sights, soft touches and sweet mnsic:

For thee, shoaling up the bay, crowd the finny nations ;
For thee, the cattle on a thousand hills live, and labor, and die :
Light is thy daily slave, darkness inviteth thee to slumber ;
Thou art served by the hands of beauty, and sublimity kneeleth at thy feet." [TUPPER.]

"The attributes of the Creator may be inferred from His works; but it is obvious that to arrive at the soundest views we must know His institutions thoroughly. To a grossly ignorant people, who suffer hourly from transgression of His laws, the character of the Deity will seem more mysterious and severe than to enlightened men, who trace the principles of His government, and who, by observing His laws, avoid the penalties of infringing them. His attributes will appear to human apprehension more and more perfect and exalted, in proportion as His works shall be understood."—George Combe.

"Our life, exempt from public haunt
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."
[SHAKESPEARE.]

"The various productions of nature were not made for us to tread upon, nor only to feed our eyes with their grateful variety, or to bring a sweet odor to us; but there is a more internal beauty in them for our minds to prey upon, did we but penetrate beyond the surface of these things into their hidden properties."—Bishop Patrick.

## CHAPTER VI.

### NATURAL LAWS—ORGANIC AND PHYSICAL.

*Direful effects of ignorance, especially as regards the unerring and unalterable laws of nature—Robert Chambers' observations on the general effect of.*

"We find in the constant harmony of nature a sufficient proof of the immutability of its laws. Every miracle would involve their infraction, a process to which nature would submit as little as to any other intervention of its empire, in which everything, from the gnat which dances in the sunbeam, up to the human mind, which issues from the brain, is governed by fixed principles."—Tuttle.

Although "the wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure, and he that hath little business shall become wise" (Eccles. xxviii. 24), yet, since God in His wisdom left man of himself to seek and acquire it, notwithstanding the abridgment of man's opportunities, and the study and labor it involves, it is man's bounden duty to employ the faculties with which he is endowed, and to make the best use of his opportunities in the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom.

The importance of this will be seen, not so much in the general effect of knowledge as in the direful effects of ignorance.

"Ignorance is the curse of God, knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven."—Shakespeare.

"There is no calamity like ignorance."—Richter.

"He that voluntarily continues ignorant is guilty of

all the crimes which ignorance produces."—Doctor Johnson.

"I believe that it is from our ignorance that our contentions flow; we debate with strife, and with wrath, with bickering and with hatred; but of the thing debated upon we remain in the profoundest ignorance."—Lytton.

Man is punished for his idleness and compelled by his fellow men to work, but although man is indirectly punished for his ignorance, he is still left in ignorance of the cause, and what is worse, it is most generally ascribed to a false one.

Ignorance is not only a curse to humanity for the reason already stated, that man's existence depends on labor and knowledge, and each factor implies and includes the other, but for this still greater reason that his organic and physical system and the organic system of all animate creation, all the forces of nature and the government of the universe are subject to and controlled by fixed and unalterable laws.

"The highest effect contemplated by revelation is to bring man into perfect harmony with law, and this is ensured by law itself acting upon intelligence. Only in obedience to law is there life and safety. Knowledge of law is imperatively demanded of nature. Ignorance of it is a capital offence. If we ignore the law of gravitation we are dashed to pieces at the foot of a precipice, or are crushed by a fallen rock; if we neglect sanitary law we are destroyed by a pestilence; if we disregard chemical laws, we are poisoned by a vapor. There is not in reality a gradation of breach of law that is not followed by an equivalent gradation of punishment. Civilization is nothing but the knowledge and observance of natural laws. The savage must learn them or be extinguished;

the cultivated must observe them or die. There is, in fact, an absolute upward impulse to the whole human race supplied by the invariable operation of the laws of nature, acting upon the common instinct of self-preservation."

"Cause and effect govern all nature—her plans and pleasures included; all that occurs or is, is caused, nor can anything whatever occur or exist, without being governed throughout by inflexible causation; but for this all would be change and chaos, now all is *certain* sequence; but for this everything would happen, and doleful uncertainty brood darkly over all things, now all is *certainty*. These laws reign supreme, and substitute perfect order for complete confusion. From them there is no appeal, and to them no exception, nor is their action ever uncertain; given causes always produce specific effects, and their own approximate effects only; while like causes invariably generate like effects; all, therefore, that we feel, enjoy or suffer is *caused,* is the absolute *necessary* product of its own *specific* cause, and of that only. Under similar circumstances nothing else could possibly have occurred, so that all uncertainty is for ever precluded. That same wisdom which devised these laws has also affixed a contrivance by which they are their own executors. They are *self-acting*—necessarily inducing in the very nature of things their appropriate rewards and penalties; in the very act of obedience consists its pleasures, whilst in and by the very transgression itself consists its penalty. These laws are not a concealed book to man, but are open, palpable and lighted up by the full blaze of both philosophy and perpetual experience: nor need any of them ever be misapprehended."—Prof. O. S. Fowler.

"Not only is man really benefited by the arrangement which leaves him to discover the natural laws for himself, although, during the period of his ignorance, he suffers much evil from want of acquaintance with them; but the progress which he has already made towards knowledge and happiness must, from the very extent of his experience be actually greater than can at present be perceived. Its extent will become more obvious, and his experience itself more valuable, after he has obtained a view of the true theory of his constitution. He will find that past miseries have at least exhausted numerous errors, and he will know how to avoid thousands of paths that lead to ruin.

"Every function of the mind and body has been instituted by the Creator; each has a legitimate sphere of activity; but all may be abused; and it is impossible always to avoid the abuse of them, except by being instructed in their nature, objects and relations. This instruction is therefore of the most beneficial kind.

"The physical and the organic laws, when thoroughly known, appear to the mind as institutions of the Creator, wise and salutary in themselves, unbending in their operation, and universal in their application. They therefore interest our intellectual faculties and strongly impress our sentiments. The duty of adapting our conduct to them comes home to us with the authority of a mandate from God.

"While we confine ourselves to recommendations to beware of damp, to observe temperance, or to take exercise, as mere acts of prudence without shewing that God has preordained painful consequences to follow from neglect, the injunction is addressed to only two or three faculties, cautiousness, for instance, and self-love in him

who receives it. But if we are instructed in the constitution of the physical world and of our organism—in the uses of the different parts of the human body, and the conditions of their healthy action,—in the causes of their derangement, and the pains consequent thereon, the intellect becomes deeply interested in the matter; and if the obligation to comply with these conditions be enforced on our moral and religious sentiments, as a duty imposed by the Creator, which we cannot neglect without suffering evil, then the motives to act in harmony with the physical and organic laws, as well as *the power of doing so* will be greatly increased."—George Combe.

When Lord Palmerston, as Home Secretary, was asked by the Presbytery of Edinburgh if he intended to advise the Queen to order a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer to be observed in order to supplicate Divine Providence to stay the cholera which affected the people in 1854, he replied as follows: "The Maker of the Universe has established certain laws of Nature for the planet in which we live, and the weal or woe of mankind depends upon the observance or neglect of those laws. One of these laws connects health with the absence of those gaseous exhalations which proceed from overcrowded human beings or from decomposing substances, whether animal or vegetable, and those same laws render sickness the almost inevitable consequence of exposure to those noxious influences. But it has at the same time pleased Providence to place it within the power of man to make such arrangements as will prevent or disperse such exhalations, so as to render them harmless; and it is the duty of man to attend to those laws of nature, and to exert the faculties which Providence has thus given to man for his own welfare. Lord Palmerston would, therefore,

suggest that the best course which the people of this country can pursue to deserve that the further progress of the cholera should be stayed will be to employ the interval that will elapse between the present time and the beginning of next spring, in planning and executing measures by which those portions of their towns and cities inhabited by the poorest classes, and which, from the nature of things, must most need purification and improvement, may be freed from those causes and sources of contagion which, if allowed to remain, will infallibly breed pestilence, and be fruitful in death, in spite of all the prayers and fastings of a united but inactive nation. When man has done his utmost for his own safety, then is the time to invoke the blessing of Heaven to give effect to his exertions."

The majority of the Presbytery expressed great dissatisfaction with this communication, and refused to acknowledge that cleansing the town would be a becoming substitute for a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer as a means of averting cholera. The civic rulers of Edinburgh, however, acted on it, and with very beneficial effects; for the disease fell far more lightly on the city on this occasion than at the previous visitation in 1831.

"It appears at first difficult to reconcile the many miseries which we see all sentient beings, ourselves included, occasionally enduring. How, the sage has asked in every age, should a Being, so transcendently kind, have allowed of so large an admixture of evil in the condition of his creatures? Do we not at length find an answer to a certain extent satisfactory, in the view which has now been given of the constitution of nature? We there see the Deity operating in the most august of his works by fixed laws, an arrangement which, it is clear,

only admits of the main and primary results being good, but disregards exceptions. Now the mechanical laws are so definite in their purposes, that no exceptions ever take place in that department; if there is a certain quantity of nebulous matter to be agglomerated and divided and set in motion as a planetary system, it will be so with hair's-breadth accuracy, and cannot be otherwise. But the laws presiding over meteorology, life and mind, are necessarily less definite, as they have to produce a great variety of mutually related results. Left to act independently of each other, each according to its separate commission, and each with a wide range of potentiality, to be modified by associated conditions, they can only have effects generally beneficial. Often there must be an interference of one law with another; often a law will chance to operate in excess, or upon a wrong object, and thus evil will be produced. Thus, winds are generally useful in many ways, and the sea is useful as a means of communication between one country and another; but the natural laws which produce winds are of infinite range of action, and sometimes are unusually concentrated in space or in time, so as to produce storms and hurricanes by which much damage is done; the sea may be by these causes violently agitated, so that many barks and many lives perish. Here, it is evident, the evil is only exceptive. Suppose, again, that a boy, in the course of his lively sports proper to his age, suffers a fall which injures his spine and renders him a cripple for life. Two things have been concerned in the case: first, the love of violent exercise, and second, the law of gravitation. Both of these are good in the main. In the rash enterprises and rough sports in which boys engage, they are only making the first delightful trials of a bodily and mental energy which has been

bestowed on them as necessary for their figuring properly in a scene where many energies are called for, but where the exertion of these powers is ever a source of happiness. By gravitation, all movable things, our own bodies included, are kept stable on the surface of the earth. But when it chances that the playful boy loses his hold (we shall say) of the branch of a tree, and has no solid support immediately below, the law of gravitation unrelentingly pulls him to the ground and thus he is hurt. Now it was not a primary object of gravitation to injure boys; but gravitation could not but operate in the circumstances, its nature being to be universal and invariable. The evil is, therefore, only a casual exception from something in the main good. War, it may be said, and said truly, is a tremendous example of evil, in the misery, hardships, waste of human life, and mis-spending of human energies, which it occasions. But what is it that produces war? Certain tendencies of human nature, as keen assertion of a supposed right, resentment of supposed injury, acquisitiveness, desire of admiration, combativeness, or mere love of excitement. All of these are tendencies which are every day, in a legitimate extent of action, producing great and indispensable benefits to us. Man would be a tame, indolent unserviceable being without them, and his fate would be starvation. War, then, huge evil though it be, is, after all but the exceptive case, a casual misdirection of properties and powers, essentially good. * * * * The sex passion in like manner leads to great evils; but the evils are only an exception from the vast mass of good connected with this affection. Providence has seen it necessary to make very ample provision for the preservation and utmost possible extension of all species. Hence this passion is conferred in great force. But the relation between the num-

ber of beings, and the means of supporting them, is only on the footing of general law. There may be occasional discrepancies between the laws operating for the multiplication of individuals, and the laws operating to supply them with the means of subsistence, and evils will be endured in consequence, even in our own highly favored species. But against all these evils, and against those numberless vexations which have arisen in all ages from the attachment of the sexes, place the vast amount of happiness which is derived from this source—the basis of the whole circle of the domestic affections, the sweetening principle of life, the prompter of all our most generous feelings, and even of our most virtuous resolves and exertions—and every ill that can be traced to it is but as dust in the balance. And here, also we must be on our guard against judging from what we see in the world at a particular era. As reason and the higher sentiments of man's nature increase in force, this passion is put under better regulation, so as to lessen many of the evils connected with it. * * * * With respect, again, to disease, so prolific a cause of suffering to man, the human constitution is merely a complicated but regular process in electro-chemistry, which goes on well, and is a source of continual gratification, so long as nothing occurs to interfere with it injuriously, but which is liable every moment to be deranged by various external agencies, when it becomes a source of pain, and, if the injury be severe, ceases to be capable of retaining life. It may be readily admitted that the evils experienced in this way are very great, but, after all, such experiences are no more than occasional, and not necessarily frequent—exceptions from a general rule of which the direct action is to confer happiness. The human constitution might have been made of a more hardy character; but we always see hardi-

ness and insensibility go together, and it may be of course presumed that we only could have purchased this immunity from suffering at the expense of a large proportion of that delicacy in which lie some of our most agreeable sensations. Or man's faculties might have been restricted to definiteness of action, as is greatly the case with those of the lower animals, and thus we should have been equally safe from the aberrations which lead to disease; but in that event we should have been incapable of acting to so many different purposes as we are, and of the many high enjoyments which the varied action of our faculties places in our power; we should not, in short, have been human beings, but merely on a level with the inferior animals. Thus, it appears, that the very fineness of man's constitution, that which places him in such a high relation to the mundane economy, and makes him the vehicle of so many exquisitely delightful sensations—it is this which makes him liable to the sufferings of disease. * * * Another large class of diseases spring from mismanagement of our personal economy. Eating to excess, eating and drinking what is noxious, disregard to that cleanliness which is necessary for the right action of the functions of the skin, want of fresh air for the supply of the lungs, undue, excessive and irregular indulgence of the mental affections, are all of them recognized modes of creating that derangement of the system in which disease consists. Here also it may be said that a limitation of the mental faculties to definite manifestations (*vulgo instincts*) might have enabled us to avoid many of these errors; but here again we are met by the consideration that, if we had been so endowed, we should have been only as the lower animals are, wanting that transcendently higher character of sensation and power, by which our enjoyments are made so much greater. In

making the desire of food, for example, with us an infinite mental manifestation, instead of the definite one, which it mainly is amongst the lower animals, the Creator has given us a means of deriving far greater gratifications from food (consistently with health) than the lower animals generally appear to be capable of. He has also given us reason to act as a guiding and controlling power over this and other propensities, so that they may be prevented from becoming causes of malady. With regard to the innocence of the suffering parties, there is one important consideration which is pressed upon us from many quarters, namely, that moral conditions have not the least concern in the working or these simply physical laws. These laws proceed with an entire independence of all such conditions, and desirably so, for otherwise there could be no certain dependence placed upon them. Thus it may happen that two persons ascending a piece of scaffolding, the one a virtuous the other a vicious man, the former, being the less cautions of the two, ventures upon an insecure place, falls, and is killed, while the other, choosing a better footing, remains uninjured. It is not in what we can conceive of the nature of things, that there should be a special exemption from the ordinary laws of matter, to save this virtuous man. Here man's sense of good and evil—his faculty of conscientiousness—would incline him to destine the vicious man to destruction and save the virtuous. But the Great Ruler of Nature does not act on such principles. He has established laws for the operation of inanimate matter, which are quite unswerving, so that, when we know them, we have only to act in a certain way with respect to them, in order to obtain all the benefits, and avoid all the evils connected with them."—From Robert Chambers' "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation."

## CHAPTER VII.

### NATURAL LAWS—ORGANIC AND PHYSICAL.

*In their relation to Gods Will, and the government of the Universe—No interference with as special manifestations of God's Will—Scriptural authority—Christ's birth and Paul's conversion considered.*

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"When we know the nature of things, we are relieved from superstition, freed from the fear of death, and not disturbed by ignorance of circumstances from which also arise fearful terrors."—Cicero.

The loss and suffering to man by reason of his ignorance of the nature and effect of organic and physical laws, even where he has been endeavoring to understand them, are incalculable. But the worst feature connected with his ignorance is the prevalent belief that calamities, disasters, accidents and diseases, are sent by God in a special way to particular persons as a punishment for their transgressions, and that the operation or suspension of these laws depend upon some special dispensation of Providence, and not as acting in accordance with, and as part of an eternal plan ordained from the beginning, which never changeth.

Two years or so ago, there were hundreds of human lives destroyed by fire and water off New York with the burning of the steamer "General Slocum." At the time a notable pastor in one of the city churches is reported to have ascribed this fatality to a special act of Providence as a punishment for the wickedness of the people. One

can hardly believe that this was said in earnest, because of the frightful conception it would convey of the Deity, were he regarded as inflicting such terrible punishment on the innocent ones who suffered from no fault of theirs.

The wonder, if any, might well have been instead, why Providence by some special act, did not prevent all such loss of life and suffering? And so God undoubtedly would, being all merciful and loving, if supernatural agency were ever employed, and the fact that He did not affords the strongest evidence that it was part of God's original design not to interfere with His fixed laws, and with Him "there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

What every reader of the Old Testament must acknowledge is, that it contains one continued story of a disobedient people and an offended God. All through, from the beginning to the end, there is one continuous appeal to the Israelites to live righteously and do the Will of God. And during all this period, we are told in many places in this history, how grieved and offended God was with the wickedness of men.

Now, it must have caused many in ages past, as well as ourselves, to wonder why God with all His mighty power should have allowed men to become so wicked, and give Him so much anguish and vexation of spirit, and why be bore with their iniquities so long. But we are not left without a complete answer to such enquiries, if the Books of Esdras (Apocrapha) are as much a part of God's revealed word to man as any other writing. And why not? No one has ever yet given a good reason why they should not be, as they once were published with and as part of The Bible. They were favorite books with the early Christians, and indeed, we owe their preserva-

tion to them. Is it because the instruction therein cannot be reconciled with the orthodoxy of the churches?

The interrogations of Esdras are so compatible with the Jewish conception of special manifestations by the Deity, and the answers given by the Angel Uriel so plainly and intelligently prove that in the moral as in the physical world God governs by general, fixed and unalterable laws, that no matter how the authenticity of these writings may be questioned, we are forced to admit that one pre-Christian writer at least acquired a knowledge of the ways of Providence that is in accord with the results of scientific investigations.

The second book contains an account of Esdras' appeal to the Almighty to deliver the children of Israel from their bondage in Babylon. He cannot understand why the heathen in their wickedness are preserved, and God's people destroyed, and he asks, "are they then of Babylon any better than they of Zion?" The angel replies that it was as easy to "tell the weight of fire or measure the blast of the wind, or call again a day that is past," as to comprehend the ways of the Most High.

Esdras acknowledges man's inability to do this, but complains that "it were better that we were not at all than that we should live still in wickedness, and suffer, and not to know wherefore." Then the angel answered Esdras and said: "The trees in the forest took counsel and said, come let us go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away from us, and that we may make us more woods. The floods of the sea also in like manner took counsel and said, come, let us go up and subdue the woods of the plain and there also we may make us another country. The thought of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it. The thought of the

floods of the sea came likewise to nought, for the sand stood up and stopped them. If thou wert judge now betwixt these two, whom wouldst thou begin to justify? or whom wouldst thou condemn?"

Esdras admits that the "thought they both devised was a foolish one," and is commended by the angel for his right judgment. "But why judgest thou not thyself also?" continues the angel. *"For like as the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea to his floods; even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but that which is upon the earth."*

Then Esdras asked God to give him understanding, not of heavenly things, but why Israel was given up as a reproach to the heathen, etc., and was told that "the more he searched the more he would marvel, for the world is full of unrighteousness and infirmities and hasteth fast to pass away."

Again, on Esdras enquiring, "Wherefore are our years few and evil, and when cometh the fruit of the floor of our reward?" he is told "to go to a woman with child and ask of her when she hath fulfilled her nine months, if her womb may keep the birth any longer within her?"

Still inquisitive as to the future, Esdras questions the angel, "if there be more to come than is past, or more past than is to come? and if he should see what things would happen in the days to come?" to which the angel replied, "As for the tokens whereof thou askest me, I will tell thee of them in part; but as touching thy life, I am not sent to shew thee, for I do not know it."

Afterwards, when Esdras again appeals to God to know why His chosen people were scattered among many, and why it was permitted him to live to see the travail of Jacob, etc., the angel answers him after this manner:

"Number me the things that are not yet come, gather me together the drops that are scattered abroad, make me the flowers green again that are withered. Open me the places that are closed, and bring me forth the winds that in them are shut up, shew me the image of a voice, and then I will declare to thee the thing that thou laborest to know."

Again, when Esdras enquires, why those who have been made, and be now, and who are to come, could not be made at once, that God might shew his judgment the sooner, he is told to ask a woman "why she bringeth not ten children at once, and not one after another?"

In answer to further enquiries, Esdras is told that God "had considered all these things in the beginning, before the earth was made, and that the end of all things would be through Him alone. That before the end of the world cometh, the heart of the inhabitants shall be changed, evil shall be put out, deceit shall be quenched, corruption shall be overcome and the truth which hath been so long without fruit shall be declared."

Then Esdras put this pertinent question, "If the world be made for our sakes, why do we not possess an inheritance with the world? how long shall this endure?" to which the angel replied: "A city is builded, and set upon a broad field, and is full of all good things. The entrance thereof is narrow, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, like as if there were a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep water; and one only path between them both, even between the fire and the water, so small that there could but one man go there at once. If this city now were given unto a man for inheritance, if he never shall pass the danger set before it, how shall he receive this inheritance? If then they that live labor not

to enter these strait and vain things they can never receive those that are laid up for them," and concludes by asking Esdras why he didn't study to discover what the future would be, rather than to bother his mind with that which is present.

Persisting still in his enquiries and desiring to know why Adam was not restrained from sinning when the earth was given to him, and suggesting that if all were punished who sinned but few would be left, Esdras is told the condition of the battle of life, "if man be overcome he must suffer, if he get the victory he shall live," and that the Most High made the world for many, but the world to come for few. Whereupon, as if in despair of any present interposition from above, and at the same time perceiving that man's reformation depended on himself, Esdras exclaims, "Swallow then down, O my soul, understanding and devour wisdom."

He, however, renews his petition, but on different grounds. Including himself among those who are sinners, he beseeches God not to consider the sins of the wicked, but to be merciful, and to have regard to those who serve Him in truth, and have clearly taught His law, and put their trust in God's righteousness and glory, although "there be none of them but have dealt wickedly, and among the faithful there be none which hath not done amiss." The answer is, "Things present are for the present, and things to come for such as be to come." Esdras is rebuked for not considering that his love could not be greater than God's love for His creatures, but is commended for "not judging himself worthy to be much glorified among the righteous." "For many great miseries shall be done to them that in the latter time shall dwell in the world, because they have walked in great pride."

He is told that he should "enquire and understand for himself how the righteous shall be saved, whose the world is, and for whom the world is created," but not to ask any more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish, nor be curious how the ungodly shall be punished, and when."

### CHRIST'S DEATH.

The manner of Christ's death also offers strong presumptive evidence in favor of the general proposition, that there has been no supernatural interference with the fixed laws of nature, and that His birth was not supernatural. Who can see and appreciate the wonderful design and harmonius co-relative action of all laws, and the glorious result likely to be reached as the development, from choice or free will, of the divine nature in man is consummated, and believe, that after so many years of patient waiting for man's obedience, God should alter His original plan, and by supernatural means, place on the earth the most perfect type of what He originally designed man to be, and then allow Him thus endowed to suffer the agony of crucifixion for the purpose of creating a death and resurrection doctrine as a means of escape to others from the consequences of disobedience to these same continuing laws, especially as the result of this change of plan has been a failure, inasmuch as men are no less sinful to-day by reason of it, but if anything suffer more from disobedience to nature's laws, because of their belief in the doctrine of atonement and redemption making them careless and indifferent as to the existence, nature and effect of such laws.

Moreover, no good reason can be assigned why God, who made man capable of doing wrong and yet subject

to unchangeable laws, should be desirous of saving men from the effect of their sins.

"For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?"—Lamentations iii. 33.

When God revealed Himself to Moses as "merciful and generous, long suffering, and abundant in goodness," He added that He would "*by no means clear the guilty,* visiting the iniquity of the father upon the children and upon the children's children unto the third and fourth generations."—Ex.xxxiv.

"In his trespass that he has trespassed and in his sin that he hath sinned, in this shall he die. Yet, ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O House of Israel? Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?"—Ezekiel xviii. 24.

"The Lord Almighty is God alone and beside Him there is no other Saviour."—Eccl. xxiv. 24.

The object and the observance of all laws were not intended to confer any benefit on the creator, but on man. Although we are doing God's will, and offering Him the most acceptable worship in obeying His laws, and offend Him most when these we disobey, it is man who suffers by their infringement and not God. We have direct and indisputable evidence that man cannot violate laws without punishment, and you can depend upon it, therefore, that God would rather put man in the way of avoiding and resisting sin than provide him with any means of escape from the effect of it.

On the other hand, there is far more reasonable ground for believing, as the earlier Christians for hundreds of years after his death believed, and as mankind are now

surely, though slowly, growing to believe, that Christ was born of a woman, made under the law (Gal. iv. 4), and grew up to manhood with the same nature at all points which we possess, not preternaturally perfect, so that he could not do wrong, but tempted as we are (Heb. iv. 15), and resisting temptation; that He did not claim even to be good (Matt. xix. 17), much less to be equal with God (St. John xiv. 28), that the literature of the period, accessible to Him, abounded with thoughts, analagous to His teaching, enabling Him to grow in wisdom (Matt. ii. 52), and reach His spiritual perfection as a man may reach it, proving in His own person that man is capable of arriving at holiness; and that it was only because God never alters His original plan and did not miraculously interfere with his fixed laws that He, notwithstanding that last despairing human cry of "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" allowed His innocent and well-beloved son to suffer ignominy and death by torture on the cross, and millions of others since, to suffer martyrdom in the same cause. Nor should this belief lessen in any degree our conception of God's greatness or power. In fact we do not honor God the less, but Christ the more, by regarding the latter as the living example of the natural development of the divine nature in man, for in His personality we have the greatest object lesson which it was intended by the Scriptures to teach, namely, man's perfection in godliness. "For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister and mother."—St. Mark iii. 35.

### PAUL'S CONVERSION.

The general effect, too, of the doctrines emanating from the writings of Paul have some weight against the

authority that his supposed conversion was caused by miraculous interposition.

In the first place, the presumption is that the Almighty had a special purpose in converting Paul, and that whatever the purpose it would be carried into effect. But we can only judge as to that purpose by subsequent events. Paul himself declares that the special "call" he received on the road to Damascus was to preach Christ. We know that the essence of Christ's teaching was the works of righteousness—the doing of good to others, and that of Paul's teaching, that godliness can be satisfied by mere faith and profession, a doctrine without any virtue beyond self-protection.

Now, supposing, which seems incredible, that although Christ was specially sent by God to instruct man in the way of righteousness and eternal life, His life and teaching were deficient for this purpose, and that God then selected Paul, an enemy of Christ, to supply this deficiency, is it not reasonable to assume that the result of Paul's conversion and teaching would at least have been consistent and reconcilable with the mission of Christ, who sought to establish peace on earth and good will among men. Yet, history shews that nearly all doctrinal disputes, wrangling, and strife in the churches, orthodoxies, sectarian divisions, and prejudices, to the great detriment of Christianity and righteousness, have their origin in, or can be traced, not to the plain and simple teaching of Christ, but to the intricate and confusing religious doctrines concerning the theory of Christ's life and person, founded on the writings of Paul, and others, who have pinned their faith on Paul's doctrines, because of their belief in his miraculous conversion.

"How much misery would have been saved to Europe

if Christians had been satisfied with the sermon on the mount."—Lord Avebury.

It therefore follows that if the general results flowing from the writings, preaching and doctrines of Paul, are owing to the fact of his supposed miraculous conversion, and were as God intended them, either that Christ was not sent by God as the saviour of mankind, or that he erred in his teaching, or, that God failed in His purpose, or changed His plan.

In accepting any of these theories, is it not presenting a deity to us as a vascillating and imperfect Being, seemingly delighted in ensnaring men for the satisfaction of having them confess before him their belief in his power to save them from the meshes he himself provided for their destruction?

Of course, if Christ was not miraculously born, then there would be nothing of importance to men in Paul's doctrine that was not included in the teaching of Christ, and there would be no occasion for a miraculous conversion, or a belief in it.

On the other hand, if Christ was specially sent by God to fill a mission according to scriptural prophesy, and to partake of the Divine Nature for that purpose, can we reasonably believe that God found it necessary or expedient in so short a time after Christ's death to select by supernatural means another agent to explain Christ and provide a new method of regeneration?

"Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

### NATURAL LAWS—MORAL.

*Object of and relation to God's Will and government of the Universe—All written laws founded on the Natural—Comments on necessity of revelation.*

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"After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people; and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest."—Jere. xxxi. 33-34.

"At the outset in understanding the primary object of law, know this, that it was never intended for individualism, but for the general good, not for personal, but universal happiness."

"True law is right reason, conformable to nature, universal, unchangeable, eternal, whose commands urge us to duty, and whose prohibitions restrain us from evil."—Cicero.

"When God created man and endued him with free will to conduct himself in all parts of life, He laid down certain immutable laws of human nature whereby the free will is in some degree regulated and restrained, and gave him also the faculty of reason to discover the purport of these laws. This law of nature, being co-eval with mankind and dictated by God Himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the

globe, in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this, and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority mediately or immediately from this original."—Sir William Blackstone.

"This, therefore, is a law not found in books, but written on the fleshy tablets of the heart, which we have not learned from man, received or read, but which we have caught up from nature herself, sucked in and imbibed, but for which we were made; we received it not by education, but by intuition.

"For it was reason, derived from the nature of things, impelling man to what is right, and deterring him from what is wrong, which does not then begin to be law, when it is found written down in books, but was so from the first moment of its existence. It was co-eternal with the Divine mind, wherefore true and ultimate law fitted to order and to forbid, is the mind of the Supreme Being.

"I see, therefore, that this has been the idea of the wisest, that law has not been devised by the ingenuity of man, nor yet is it a mere decree of the people, but an eternal principle which must direct the whole universe, ordering and forbidding everything with entire wisdom."—Cicero.

This idea has been beautifully expressed by Hooker (Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I), "of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempt from her power."

Law is the God-given power to men of knowing good from evil, and the secret agent—"the holy spirit of discipline," by which these two opposing forces in

human nature may be reconciled and the latter subdued.

When any considerable number of men unite for a common purpose, such as a Trades-union or Fraternal Benevolent Society, the first matter of importance is to agree upon a Constitution and By-laws,—the one defining the object of such union, and the other formulating a code of rules which shall regulate the management and govern and control the actions and conduct of the individual members who have combined to carry it out.

These minor rules or laws are first brought to your attention, because the majority of men are acquainted with the formation and management of some inter-social organization, and can at once understand and appreciate the necessity of the rules and by-laws connected therewith.

The object is to bring the reader's mind at once to realize this important fact, namely, that men do not become members of any such association or society for the purpose of obeying its By-laws or Rules, these being the means only to an end, namely, that of accomplishing the common purpose set forth in the constitution.

Now, it is on the same principle, based on a like motive, that what are known as written laws are instituted for the government of nations, provinces, cities, towns and villages. They must all be considered, as they were intended to be the means only to an end. Whatever necessity there may be for the government of nations, communities and societies by law, it is manifest that obedience to law is not the object for which they exist, any more than it can be said a ship was made for the purpose of the rudder, because the latter is necessary for the control or government of the ship.

Another feature, equally important for our earliest

comprehension, is this, that although we speak of laws in the plural number, and of different kinds, and distinguish one kind from another as written, revealed, unwritten, moral, common, statute, criminal or ecclesiastical, *there is but one law,* known as the natural, the unwritten, the moral, or the Divine law.

All other so-called laws are but evidences or records shewing how man has interpreted, adapted and applied the principles, forces, or phenomena of natural law so far as he has acquired a knowledge of them, to meet the exigencies of national, provincial and municipal government, and in regulating communities and societies of men.

What is known as the *moral* law is that part of the natural law dictated by the holy spirit of discipline in man, and which manifests in the highest degree when observed, the Divine nature within him; but because it is not particularly expressed in the Scriptures as a positive law—(We explain why in another chapter)—men have been taught to treat it as being inferior to revealed or written law. This is a great mistake, however, for as Aristotle says, "The moral law is superior to the written law, and treats of matters of greater weight; for the Supreme Ruler is more to be trusted than the written law."

We shall perceive this truth more clearly as we proceed. In the meantime, as it appears certain that all supposed revealed and written laws are but interpretations of the natural law, and as Puffendorff says, "it is the will of God man should frame his life according to that disposition and method which He seems peculiarly to have assigned him above the life of brutes; and since this cannot otherwise be achieved and compassed than by the observ-

ance of natural law, it must be supposed that God hath laid an obligation on man to obey the law, as a means not arising from human invention, or changeable at human pleasure, but expressly ordained by God himself for the accomplishment of this design," it is important to feel, that as part of the chief object of life,—that of subduing the earth—man should consider the subjugation of himself and the development and use of his faculties in the discovery and application of the secrets of natural law, as an imperative duty.

The task will not be an easy one. To acquire sufficient knowledge and wisdom wherewith to discover and understand natural law, its causes and effects, requires the highest development of philosophy, and is properly regarded as a science. But to submit oneself wholly to the government of natural law, and in all the daily actions and duties of life, to "overcome evil with good," is to become perfect in wisdom and righteousness—a result, the experience of all men teaches, is very difficult to reach. "For many shall be called but few chosen"; and as our immortal Shakespeare hath written, "If to do were as easy to know as what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces." It is this fact that furnishes the strongest argument in favor of the Mosaic ordinances and all Scriptural instruction in righteousness being Divinely inspired. Because it may fairly be assumed that men were then conditionally unfitted to interpret, adapt and apply the fundamental principles of natural law to civil or moral government, if God caused this to be done for them, as undoubtedly there were communities then existing necessarily requiring such government.

This, however, affords no proof that men were not then

endowed with enabling faculties for this purpose. What they lacked in addition to sufficient knowledge and experience for a due submission to government by law, was an executive head with authority and power to enforce it. For, if men had intellectual faculties enabling them to understand and appreciate the Mosaic ordinances, in sufficient measure to cause obedience to them, it follows that they had faculties capable of being developed and exercised in the construction thereof.

Indeed, it may be doubted if any measure ever instituted for the government of man had any potency, where the majority of those affected by it did not approve or appreciate the underlying spirit or motive, *i. e.,* the natural law, or what is commonly called "common sense."

If, therefore, we have been right so far in our conception of the origin and object of law, and if it be true that man has really been capable of understanding and acting in conformity with natural law from the first, it follows that written or revealed laws have been only conditionally and not absolutely necessary for the moral government of man.

Puffendorff, in his most celebrated work, "The law of Nature and Nations," says "The laws of nature would have a full and perfect power of binding men, although God Almighty had never proposed them anew in his revealed word. For man was under obligation to obey his creator by what means soever he was pleased to convey to them the knowledge of His will. Nor was there any absolute necessity of a particular revelation to make a rational creature sensible of his subjection to the superior Authority and Governor of things."

The significance of this conclusion will be evident to

those who believe that man can be brought to a state of perfection in godliness independent of revelation, especially, if on investigating the evidence respecting direct revelation from God it be found that such is limited to a much smaller portion of the Scriptures than is generally supposed.

The question as to what God did actually reveal, and when direct revelation ceased, is an important one for consideration; and although it would involve too lengthy an argument to be fully entered upon here, yet a few words *en passant*, will not be out of place.

We have stated as a plausible reason for direct revelation that it was conditionally necessary to enable men to dwell sociably together in order to carry out the true object of life, and we have seen that men from the first were endowed with intellectual faculties for interpreting and applying the principles of natural law, otherwise such men as Jonah, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob could not have become righteous and qualified themselves for God's Heavenly Kingdom, and further, "that the Gentiles which had not the law did by nature the things contained in the law."

But within the last few years there has come to light a code of laws, cut in stone as were the Commandments given to Moses, which there is no reason to doubt were promulgated amongst the Gentiles 700 years before the latter, and are claimed to be the oldest code of laws in existence.*

Nor can one read this most ancient code without perceiving that man unaided, so far as known, by revelation, as truly interpreted, adopted and applied the principles

* The code promulgated by Hammurabi, King of Babylon, B.C. 2285-2242. Translated by C. H. W. John, M.A. Publishers, T. & T. Clark, 58 George street, Edinburgh.

of natural law, as we can perceive them to be the foundation of the Mosaic code, and differ from what men would now generally approve, only in the severity of the penalties imposed—those under this ancient code, as they were under the Mosaic, being unduly excessive as compared with those imposed under modern civilized government. Moreover, as Paul said, "The word of God is not bound," and although the bible is commonly called the "Holy Scriptures," and regarded as the only book containing the word of God or matter of revelation, there is no authority for including the books of the New Testament in the same category as *The Scriptures*, which Christ and His apostles referred to, in the sense that the former writings were the result of direct communication or inspiration from God. These books are but historical records of the doings, thoughts and sayings of Christ and His apostles, and do not, nor does any other writing contain any reliable evidence that the mind of God directed or inspired them.

Nor is there any authority for believing that the work of selecting and uniting these books under one title was divinely authorized or inspired.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE UNWRITTEN OR MORAL LAW FURTHER CONSIDERED.

*Superiority of Natural law—Verified in Christ's life and teaching—Instructive exposition by Doctor Martineau on the foundation of the Moral law.*

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"But above all, the victory is most sure
For him who, seeking faith by virtue, strives
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience—conscience reverenced, and obeyed
As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
And His most perfect image in the world."

[WORDSWORTH.]

"If thou would'st hear the Nameless, and wilt dive
Into the temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knewest, tho' thou canst not know."

[TENNYSON.]

"Laws are made, or more accurately speaking they are formulated, for law breakers. This is a way of saying that law expresses a pre-existing feeling or sense of right, which needs to be embodied in the language of command only when some one seems to violate it. It is important that this should be understood, because the unexpressed or unwritten law of life and conduct must be a fundamental and paramount principle latent in the inner conscience, and forming the instinct to which a

written law appeals. This idea was set forth by the Apostle Paul in those memorable words, "For when the gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." (Romans II. 14-15). As a matter of fact and experience, those who conform to a law willingly are conscious of its rectitude, while those who are restrained by it are lawless in principle, and, but for the penal consequences of law breaking, would incontinently offend. That which we have called the inner feeling or sense of right is of course dependent for its development on the combined influences of example and education, but the root and principle of honor and honesty exist in priority and wholly independent of the accident of culture."

"Strange, then, nor less than monstrous might be deemed
The failure, if the Almighty, to this point
Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
The excellence of moral qualities
From common understanding; leaving truth
And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark,
Hard to be won, and only by a few!
Strange, should he deal herein in nice respects,
And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:
The primal duties shine aloft like stars;
The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of man, like flowers.
The generous inclination, the just rule
Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—
No mystery is here; no special boon
For high and not for low; for proudly graced
And not for meek of heart." [WORDSWORTH.]

Strange indeed, but true, if God had not endowed man

with faculties capable of comprehending the excellence of moral qualities. And the reason why the rectitude of God's chosen people, notwithstanding all the law and the prophets from Moses until the birth of Christ, was inferior to that of the gentiles, who did by nature the things contained in the law, was because the former took no clue from nature; they were blind to cause and effect and looked only to revelation. "They did not recognize an established and regular order of nature as the means through which God governs the world, and to which He requires man to adopt his conduct; but they regarded every element of physical nature and every faculty of the human mind as under the administration of a special and supernatural providence. They viewed God as wielding all these elements arbitrarily, according to His will, and on that Will they believed they could operate by religious faith and observances."—George Combe.

The Jews obeyed the revealed ordinances only to be justified thereby, and not as a justification of their belief in God; they placed all their faith upon keeping the mere letter thereof, without comprehending the fact that the unwritten law or law of nature contained the spirit and fundamental principles of all written or revealed ordinances and were of far more importance to be observed.

But Christ understood this, and not only made it the chief object of His teaching, but he also made His life, conduct and actions one grand and glorious example of the truths which he taught.

He knew that man had been commanded by God to love his neighbor as himself (see Levi. xix. 18), but he also knew that no commandment, revealed or written, was sufficient *per se* to justify obedience. He knew that the fundamental principle of divine law was *Love*, and that

unless man loved God and his neighbor as himself, the mere observance of written law without the operative function of the spirit made the latter a dead letter, with a tendency to retard rather than to advance man in his natural evolution or progress towards perfection in righteousness, which he desired men to reach, when he said, "Be ye perfect even also as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Who can read Christ's sermon on the Mount and not be convinced that his appeal was to the inner nature of man and not to revealed or written law for the motive power of righteousness? Nor have we to look for confirmation of this beyond the fact that he made it clear to his audience that he "came not to destroy the law," since it shews that the probable effect of his sermon would lead men ignorant of natural law to believe this, whereas he was only seeking to establish a preference for the latter without disparaging the necessity of the former.

"Ye have heard that it was said by *them* of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery in his heart." Yet, according to the doctrine of Paul, "Where no law is there is no transgression." However, as the Apostle Peter said, speaking of the Epistles of Paul, "there are some things in them hard to understand," and history will certainly verify this statement.

All laws of a prohibitory nature, and these include nearly all written laws, have been passed only by reason of the exigencies of civil government; they are not universal in their application; they operate as a protection and benefit indirectly to the rest of mankind by restraining the wrong doer, but do not improve his character, or effect the purpose for which natural law was designed.

The penalties imposed by human laws, and the fear of God's wrath in respect of disobedience to revealed law, have much to do with the importance men attach to them, and doubtless led them to believe that all written laws are more important to be observed and respected than the unwritten law. But this is a mistake. The consequences of violating the one is far less serious in its effect than the consequences attending the non-observance of the other. In the first place, all written laws being founded on natural law, both laws are violated at the same time that you violate any written law, and although man may be directly punished for an infraction of the former he remains still answerable for an infraction of the latter, and in all probability is left without a proper appreciation and respect for the natural law, which is the only and unfailing safeguard against further liability to offend.

"By asceticism, by laws and enactments, by pains and penalties, you may repress the outward manifestations of evil; but nothing short of bringing a larger good will overcome the evil principle itself."—W. De Witt Hyde.

In the second place, natural law is far more important in relation to its cause and effect than written or revealed laws, because its object is not so much to prevent men from doing wrong, as to induce them to do what is right, and to make laws for this purpose operative in any written form is impracticable.

You may have some principles, rules of equity, axioms, proverbs, parables and precepts, useful in their application in a general way, but no nation or people ever attempted to establish laws with penalties annexed for not doing right.

The fact that Courts of Equity have been instituted for adjusting the rights of persons founded on the unwritten

law, and yet admit of but few rules for general application, shews the impracticability of adapting any settled written laws for correcting mistakes and errors of judgmen and in enforcing acts of morality and righteousness in the everyday actions and conduct of men.

Christ knew that all the wisdom and understanding necessary to a perfect life could not be embodied in any written law, yet directly and by means of parables he taught as man never yet taught, with the object of redeeming men from the bondage of the written law by the power of love. He clearly perceived that the Jewish conception of law had ever been a false one, and that they had never understood, much less acknowledged, the existence of a natural law as the foundation of all written laws—the superior force and efficacy of which offered the truest and surest way of manifesting the divine nature in man.

He therefore "opened his mouth in parables," and "uttered things kept secret from the foundation of the world."—Matt. xiii. 35.

With him, as Doctor Martineau says, "the inward affections, whence all action flows, suspended whole chapters of the Mosaic code. He over-rid admitted statutory ordinances of God by his intimated prior idea in the construction of nature and the moral life of man, and by this mode of treatment he took away all final authority from defined systems of law and usage, and made them liable to be tested by the standards of their reason and higher sense of right, making living conscience the perpetual amender of historic enactments and social practice."

The parables of Christ particularly supply material for reflection on the principles underlying natural law. It is in that of the Good Samaritan where, perhaps, He most

clearly shews, not only the superiority of the natural law, but some ill effect of being under he written law. There was nothing in the written law compelling either the Priest or Levite, under fear of punishment, to stop and render assistance to the wounded traveller, and so these representatives of religion and the "revealed" laws, passed on with their hearts untouched by any pity, compassion or love, apparently unconcerned as to the fate of him, whom it was left for the representative of natural law to succor, and who exemplified in this act the life and teaching of God's noblest son.

"A written law is not only inferior in value to the unwritten law within us, but it actually blunts the instinct of right by relieving the conscience from the invigorating tasks of thinking for itself, and, as it were, feeling its way through life by its own moral instinct. Obviously, no pretence of righteousness, or even of the avoidance of actual wrong doing, could ever be based on the most rigorous observance of the Mosaic code, or of any other system of laws which could possibly be devised. Long before the question of law or lawfulness is formulated in the mind, the unwritten law has been broken, and this is it which constitutes the crossing of the boundary-line between innocence and wrong doing. No expressed law ever did more than put a barrier of restraint in the way of the overt and actual wrong-doer. It is wholly dead and useless as an agent of culture. This is why we strive to throw those who are in doubt about the right and wrong of matters of personal conduct back upon their own consciences for guidance. True self-culture in the ways of right must begin in the heart, and the first step must consist in placing the will under the dominion

of the conscience, so that whatever is even suspected of being evil may be instantly avoided without waiting to ask self, much less others, whether it is wrong. If it be thought of as possibly wrong, it is so to the person who thinks of it. We should not therefore break up the unity of man's nature and responsibility by speaking and thinking of his religious character and destiny as separate, or at least separable from his worldly character and conduct. There is, or ought to be, no distinction or difference between the wisdom that comes from above and worldly wisdom. "Goodness" is not something to be added to the consciousness, but must form an integral part of the character. Righteousness, in the only true sense of that much abused term, is right all through. The righteous man is not more what is termed "a saint" than his neighbors. He is simply honest and true of heart, and therefore honest and true in his conduct, and honorable and trustworthy in all his dealings with others. He is not a professor, but a practical good liver and doer. His honesty of feeling and purpose, and his conscious sincerity and self-respect enable him to avow the views he entertains and the hopes he cherishes; but, while he does not shrink, because he is honest and candid, from giving a reason for the faith that is in him, he does not parade his opinions, or seek credit for the simple doing of what he conceives to be his duty.*

> "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self- control,
> These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
> Yet not for power,—power of herself
> Would come uncalled for—but to live by law."
>
> [TENNYSON.]

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* Author not known. Taken from The Family Herald.

Doctor Martineau says "that the moral quality lies exclusively in the inner spring, of which the act is born. It is on the home enclosure, within the private plot of our consciousness, that we make acquaintance with the springs of action, and are forced to see them as they are; and if here it is that we discern the sacredness and the sin, our primary school of morals lies within ourselves, and we may dismiss, as a play of ingenious fiction all attempts to explain our own conscience as a reflection of other men's looks, and to elaborate the delicate sanctities of private duty out of the coarse fibre of public self-interest. Society, once tempted by flattery to believe itself the *source* of moral law, is ever sliding towards dissolution; but, while reverently living as its product and its organ, becomes ever firmer and more glorious.

From the constitution of the human mind which we have traced, we see how it is that all great moral natures instinctively turn inwards; and by their native thirst for *divine knowledge,* are carried to the fountains of *self-knowledge.* There it is, in the secret glades of thought and motive, that the springs of life arise, and the distinctive lights and shadows of good and ill are seen to play; and thither is the soul invariably led by the genius of duty. Even amid the brilliant distractions of Athens, it was to this centre that Socrates retreated from the speculations of science, and the dazzling ambitions of men, and disciplined himself to be the martyr of the first ethical philosophy, and the father of all others. Under the weight of empire, it was the chief care of Marcus Aurelius to commune with his own heart, and from that silent converse he brought a strength and harmony of virtue which shames the whole calendar of saints. As soon as the religion of Christ had had time to make itself

felt, and to fix its spirit legibly in the hymn, the prayer, the literature, of the faith, the unsuspected contents of the human soul seemed to pour themselves forth in a flood of pathetic confession, and to open resources for a new and deeper drama of life. And compare where we will the expression of ancient and of modern civilization, in their epics, their tragedies, their art, or their philosophy, the relative interest of the outward world pales in the later ages before the inner mysteries of our own nature. The broad canvas of history fascinates us less than the cabinet portrait of biography with its silent lips and meaning eyes; and, through the pomp of statesmanship and the din of revolution, we pierce with eager search to the play of individual passion and the conflict of personal character. This reflective tendency, this retirement within, is due to the hidden sense rather than the open discovery that here is the true seat of law—the place of judgment, whence there is no appeal. And hence it is never in light mood, with noisy and jaunty step, but with hushed breath, and on the tip-toe of silence, that we draw near to look into these inner circles of the soul. Elsewhere, we can go familiarly in and out, and take our notes of what we find, without disturbance to the humour of the hour; but there we know there is a *sanctuary,* and 'ere we reach it an invisible incense breathes upon our hearts and subdues us into involuntary worship. While the mere external study of man, the scrutiny of them by intellectual eyesight, is the constant source of cynical illusion, meditative self-knowledge is the true school of reverence, of sympathy, of hope, of immovable humility; for there, we see side by side, what we are and what we ought to be; and of unquenchable aspiration; for there too we meet, spirit to spirit, the almighty holiness that lifts us to himself.

If men could be quietly consulted one by one, taken into the closet of some socratic questioner, schooled in reaching the confessional of thought they would readily be made aware of their inward discernment of ethical differences among their incentives, and would own a law of God written on the heart.

We find our proper personality only in society; and it is by exposure in the light of other consciences that the colors of our own steal forth. Especially is it the play of inequality in the characters around us, the repulsion of those below, the attraction of those above our level, that wakes up the forces of our proper nature, and, by compelling us to define our aspirations, turns the blind tracts of habit into the luminous path of a spiritual career. Am I thrown among associates who breathe a lower atmosphere, and who appeal to incentives which in my heart I cannot honor as the best? My secret ideal stands before me as it never did before; and in my compunction if I am weak, in my resolution if I am strong, its authority looks down upon me with living eyes of pity or of help. Am I admitted into the company of greater and purer men, who move among the upper springs of life; who aim at what had scarcely visited my dreams; who hold themselves, with freest sacrifice, at the disposal of affections known to me only by momentary flash; who rise above the fears that darken me, and do the duties that shame me, and bear the sorrows that break me down? The whole secret and sanctity of life seem to burst upon me at once; and I find how near the ground is the highest I have touched, and how the steps of possibility ascend, and pass away, and lose themselves in heaven. This is the discipline, this the divine school for the unfolding of our moral nature, the appeal of character without to char-

acter within. The sacred poem of our own hearts, with its passionate hymns, its quiet prayers, is writ in invisible ink, and only when the lamp of other lives brings its warm light near do the lines steal out, and give their music to the voice, their solemn meaning to the soul. In this sense of interdependence we do, undoubtedly, owe our moral sentiment largely to others, but only because they, too, bear *that* about them which we revere or abhor, and their character serves as the mirror of our own. In a *world morally constituted,* where the authority of conscience hast at least its implicit presence in every mind the ethical action and reaction of men upon each other will be infinite, and will so far prevail over the solitary force of the individual nature, that no one, however exceptionally great, will escape all relation to the general level of his time. The dependence, then, of the moral consciousness for its growth upon society is incident to its very nature. The common sentiment of conscience is the very ground of public law, the assumption of private honor, and weaves us all into one texture of moral relations, which has neither continuous strength, nor pattern of beauty, till the single threads disappear in the whole and take the order of the disposing will.

No suspicion of illusion against our primary faculties can be entertained, for we have access to no world but that which they present to us, and the account we cannot check it is our wisdom to take on trust. The moral intuition exists; and the atheistic universe vanishes before its face. We know ourselves to be living under command and with freedom to give or withhold obedience; and this lifts us at once into divine relations, and connects us with One supreme in the distinguishing glories of personal existence, wisdom, justice, holiness. We have

only to open and read the credentials of conscience, and this discovery bursts upon us at once. That sense of authority which pervades our moral nature and tempers it with silent reverence, places us under that which is *higher than we,* which has claims on our personality, and hovers over it, and keeps near its problems with transcendent presence. But the world of nature and outward phenomena has in it nothing that is thus superhuman; nor can matter and force, with their linear necessities and predetermined tracks of successive effects give the free spirit its alternative law. And the world of humanity, however rich in saints and heroes who are above you and me, and may well discipline our hearts to homage, is here all in the same case with us, and bends low before the same vision. Seeing then, that the impersonal cannot morally rule the personal, and that over living spirit nothing short of living spirit greater in elevation can wield authority, what remains but that we recognize the communion of a divine visitant, and accept the light of conscience as no longer an unmeaning phosphorescence of our own nature, but as the revealing and appealing look of God? The wise and good of every age have variously struggled to express in adequate terms the solemnity of human obligation; but all the strivings of their thought have culminated in this: "The word of conscience is the voice of God." To this, indeed, all the indications lead. The law that is over us, we cannot fail to observe is a *sclective* law; it looks, as we have shewn, at the springs of action *together,* announces a comparison between them, and tells the result: "*This* is worthier than *that.*" Such a selective law can issue from nothing but a preferential will. In the realm of nature and necessity the forces move right on to their determinate end;

compare nothing, and prefer nothing, and turn up, without pause or scruple, the sole possibility given them to execute. And this selective law speaks direct to a selective power in us; exalting *this* above *that*, it requires that we should do so too. It is the appeal of will to will: "This is my choice; be it yours also." And so it is nothing less than the bending of the divine holiness to train the human; the overflowing sanctity of the Supreme Mind, shed forth to elicit by free sympathy the secret possibility of ours. This new and spiritual function ascribed to God is but the just sequel, as we ascend the gradations of being, to his prior indwelling in the world. As the forces of nature are his causality, and the instincts of the creature his seeing guidance of the blind, so the alternative apprehensions of conscience are the preferential lights of his moral nature, the first reporting his power, the second his wisdom, the third his righteousness. That it is the same one life which is the ground of all is plain from the intertexture of the whole; for it is amongst the instinctive impulses of the animated world that the problems of ethical experience first arise; and it is through the physical constitution of nature, and of our own organism in particular that many of the penalties of the moral law make themselves felt. The causality of the world, therefore, is at the disposal of the all-holy Will; and whether within or without us, in the distant stellar spaces, or in the self-conscious life of the tempted or aspiring mind, we are in one divine embrace—"God over all, blessed for ever."

Here, too, we reach the precise point of transition from morals to religion, and step across the boundary from Pagan nobleness to Christion sanctity. Divine guidance has never and nowhere failed to men; nor has it ever, in

the most essential things, largely differed amongst them: but it has not always been recognized as divine, much less as the living contact of Spirit with Spirit—the communion of affection between God and man. While conscience remained an *impersonal law,* stern and silent, with only a jealous Nemesis behind, man had to stand up alone, and work out for himself his independent magnanimity, and he could only be the pagan hero. When conscience was found to be inseparably blended with the Holy Spirit, and to speak in tones immediately divine, it became the very shrine of worship: its strife, its repentance, its aspirations, passed into the incidents of a living drama, with its crises of alienation and reconcilement, and the cold obedience to a mysterious necessity was exchanged for the *allegiance of personal affection.* And this is the true emergence from the darkness of ethical law to the tender light of the life divine. The veil falls from the shadowed face of moral authority, and the directing love of the all-holy God shines forth.*

"If our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God."—I. John iii. 21.

* "The Seat of Authority in Religion," by Doctor James Martineau.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE DOCTRINE OF PROGRESS TOWARD MORAL PERFECTION.

*The evolution philosophy of Bishop Butler and Herbert Spencer.*

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"The best man is he who most tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he is perfecting himself."—Socrates.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. v. 48.

As to the perfection of Noah, Abram and Job, see Gen. vi. 9; Gen. xvii. 1; Job i. 7; and see Ps. xxxvii. 37; St. Matt. xix. 21, and St. Luke vi. 40.

"Of all the beliefs that the philosophers of the last century have bequeathed to our age, as if to replace those which they had felt themselves compelled to discard, none has struck such deep root as the belief in the progress of humanity. It grows every day and deserves to be considered one of the chief characteristics of thought in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the notion of fatality that ordinarily accompanies it shocks many good men. If by progress be understood an absolute direct line toward perfection, the word is unsuited to describe the unbroken march of humanity, in which so many natural laws, all equally inflexible, cross and recross each other to produce effects which cannot be foreseen with anything like exactness and still less submitted to calculation. The authors who have adhered to the ideas of progress toward perfection, stumble at the difficulty of reconciling

with a fatal law of evolution toward good the manifest retrogradations towards evil. Criticism has made them pay dear for their attachment to a theory, which is feeble simply because it is not sufficiently general, and because it assumes final happiness merely as a conjecture obtained by induction, if it be not the result of some disposition to mysticism. They have compromised their doctrine and would have brought it into complete discredit, perhaps, if it had been possible to lose sight of the numberless testimonies that science brings in its favor. The thing wanting in the different theories of progress is not an abundance of facts authorizing the induction of a purpose, but a *fixed principle to be, as it were, a guarantee of it—a law from which this conjectured purpose might be deduced.* If this principle were seized, the necessity of progress would be demonstrated, and criticism would be reduced to silence. The problem to be solved would merely consist in adjusting to this certitude our belief in responsibility, and our idea of duty. Humanity will attain the happiness promised to it by the defenders of the idea of progress. if happiness be the natural effect of a conditioned development, that is to say, if there be a law whose working out succeeds in effecting the full satisfaction of all the needs of every creature endowed with sensibility.

"The Philosophy of Mr. Spencer resolves for the first time the difficult problem raised by the ancient conflict between religion and science, here represented by philosophy, which is its highest expression. It has been maintained that this conflict must end in the complete overthrow of one of the two adversaries, either the subjugation of science by religion, or the entire suppression of religion. The successive defeats inflicted by criticism

on theology seemed to justify the belief that of the two combatants it is religion that must go down.

"It is already a high tribute to the originality of a philosophy, that it lays down the preliminaries of a treaty of perpetual peace between religion and science. The philosophy of Mr. Spencer enjoys above all others a privilege no less dignified than this. While some confine themselves to speculation on the data of science, without concerning themselves with action, and others build up theories of action on insufficient or disputable data, the philosophy of Mr. Herbert Spencer, is able to deduce from the loftiest of his speculations ends of action for men in society In shewing us in the evolution of humanity the effect of a law guaranteed and explained by the universal laws that flow from the first principle, the persistence of force, it teaches us that the progress of society consists of a series of states of unstable equilibrium, covering relatively to us, vast periods, and always liable to be overturned by the shock of outward circumstances, to reconstitute themselves afterward, sometimes on an inferior model in the rank of progress, sometimes on a superior model, according to the action of these same circumstances, and the condition of the social unities disengaged from their former aggregations. It shews us, moreover, the strict solidarity that unites mankind in the nation, and even in the race; it explains the important part that human actions play in preparing the social arrangements that constitute the temporarily permanent conditions of equilibrium, and in originating the causes that later bring on social perturbations; it makes us feel the mutual dependence which diffuses throughout the social body the good as well as the evil that a single individual can do, the reaction which visits on the individual

or nation the evil and the good that individual or nation may perform; finally, propagation, which causes to echo in a country the violent transgressions of the moral law that are perpetrated in a distant land.

"By this teaching so fruitful in social applications, the philosophy of Mr. Spencer seems to us especially calculated to give encouragement to action. So long as his sentiment of duty is unenlightened, man remains in ignorance of what he ought to do; he hesitates and is liable to go astray; instructed in the conditions under which the law of social progress is fulfilled, he knows what direction he should take; he perceives at what point the intelligent forces, united for a common purpose, the advancement of human happiness should apply their irresistible lever. He knows too, that the force he expends on this labor will have its effect, that his indifference or ill-will must inevitably produce disastrous effects. He sees 'clearly, in the natural constitution of things,' recompenses and penalties certain, in quite another fashion from those that 'the traditional beliefs announce.' This certainty sustains and animates him, because he perceives 'that the natural laws he obeys are at once inexorable and beneficent.' He sees that by conformity with them people march toward a higher degree of perfection, and reach a higher degree of happiness. For this reason he urges their observance, for this reason he is indignant at their misapprehension. It is in affirming the eternal principles of things, and the necessity of obeying them, that he shews himself essentially religious.

"In this way, Mr. Herbert Spencer gives the hand to religion, under the elevated form it is coming to assume in our day, and, at the same time, adheres to the doctrines of the positive thinkers. He recognizes the *noumenon*

beneath the phenomenon, he feels the eternal behind the transitory, he shews happiness to be the result of obedience to a divine law of equality joined with liberty, which will be attained by the observance of justice, and of that other virtue which consists in abstinence from a right that may injure another, and in doing cheerfully what contributes to another's happiness, a virtue which he calls beneficence, and which, in Christian speech goes by the name of charity. Finally, with the positivists, he admits the necessity of knowing the law in order to obey it; if, to use the language of one of these, he seeks nobleness of life in liberty, he finds the highest degree of liberty in obedience to the eternal law."

The foregoing excerpts are from Doctor Cazelle's "Outline of Evolution-philosophy," by Herbert Spencer, in which the Doctor carefully, impartially and intellectually reviews a subject that occupied most of the time of one of our greatest philosophers. Believing in the Doctor's observations and conclusions we cannot overestimate the value and importance of Spencer's scientific inquiry in its relation to the Divine will and government of the universe, because, the scheme we have propounded, and which will produce, as we believe the results originally designed by God to be consummated, becomes fully established by this evolution-philosophy, replete with wisdom and harmony in all its parts, and in every respect worthy of the Almighty Being who designed it.

Moreover, as the scheme propounded by us receives confirmation in the scientific results of Spencer's philosophy, so also, as we shall endeavor to prove, is this philosophy more firmly established by our own conceptions of the Divine plan.

We would therefore urge those of our readers who

have not already done so, to study Mr. Spencer's works, especially "Social Statics," since it is not within the scope of this work to teach, but only to mention the value, importance and general effect of science in its relation to the Divine Will.

The following, however, is a synopsis of Mr. Spencer's argument:

"All imperfection is unfitness to the conditions of existence.

"This unfitness must consist either, in having a faculty or faculties in excess; or in having a faculty or faculties deficient; or both.

"A faculty in excess is one which the conditions of existence do not afford full exercise to; and a faculty that is deficient is one from which the conditions of existence demand more than it can perform.

"But it is an essential principle of life, that a faculty to which circumstances do not allow full exercise, diminishes; and that a faculty on which circumstances make excessive demands, increases.

"And so long as this excess and this deficiency continue, there must continue decrease on the one hand and growth on the other.

"Finally all excess and all deficiency must disappear; that is, all unfitness must disappear; that is, all imperfection must disappear.

"Thus the ultimate development of the ideal man is logically certain, as certain as any conclusion in which we place the most implicit faith: for instance, that all men must die. For why do we infer that all men will die? Simply because, in an immense number of past experiences, death has uniformly occurred. Similarly then, as the experiences of all people in all times—experi-

ences that are embodied in maxims, proverbs and moral precepts, and that are illustrated in biographies and histories, go to prove that organs, faculties, powers, capacities, or whatever else we call them, grow by use and diminish by disuse, it is inferred that they will continue to do so. And if this inference is unquestionable, then is the one above deduced from it—that humanity must in the end become completely adapted to its conditions, unquestionable also.

"Progress, therefore, is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo, or the unfolding of a flower.

"The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and providing the human race continues, and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness.

"As surely as the tree becomes bulky when it stands alone, and slender if one of a group; as surely as the same creature assumes the different forms of cart-horse, and race-horse, according as its habits demand strength or speed; as surely as a blacksmith's arm grows large, and the skin of a laborer's hand thick; as surely as the eye tends to become long-sighted in the sailor, and short-sighted in the student; as surely as the blind attain a more delicate sense of touch; as surely as a clerk acquires rapidity in writing and calculation; as surely as the musician learns to detect an error of a semitone midst what seems to others a very babel of sounds; as surely as a passion grows by indulgence and diminishes when restrained; as surely as a disregarded conscience becomes inert, and one that is obeyed active; as surely as there is

any efficiency in educational culture, or any meaning in such terms as habit, custom, practice; so surely must the human faculties be moulded into complete fitness for the social state; so surely must the things we call evil and immorality disappear; so surely must man become perfect."

Now if, as Dr. Cazelles says, "humanity will attain the happiness promised to it by the defenders of the idea of progress, if happiness be the natural effect of a conditioned development, that is to say, if there be a law whose working out succeeds in effecting the full satisfaction of all the needs of every creature endowed with sensibility." are we not able to affirm, without fear of contradiction, that there is nothing better designed to promote in man a knowledge and love of God, than the task of discovering, investigating and developing the wonderful works of His creation; also that there is no greater truth based on experience than this, that all things pertaining to the subjugation of the earth, including man himself in the realm of law, offer to men who engage in it, the highest sources of pleasure, and to mankind in general, the most certain road to happiness?

To expatiate on the blessings to man by the improved conditions of life, owing to the practical use of his faculties in this direction would fill hundreds of pages.

Moreover, although the Utilitarian doctrine "that pleasure or exemption from pain constitutes the only possible end of action," may not be sound, yet, if in the main happiness is the result, it offers no objection to the proposition so ably maintained by Doctor Paley, in his *Moral Philosophy,* "that God, when He created the human species wished their happiness, and made for them the provision which He has made with that view and for that purpose."

If, therefore, we have succeeded in establishing as a fact, that the main object of life is not to be righteous, or to observe the law, but to be righteous and to observe the law as a necessary means of enabling man to do the will of God, in subduing the earth, etc., which the Scriptures declare to be the purpose of our existence here; and that although the subjugation of man by natural law and the written interpretations thereof brings us nearer to our Heavenly Father in the perfection of His character, the main purpose of law is not to confer any benefit on God for His own sake, or on any individual in particular, but is for the general benefit and happiness of mankind; then, it would appear that we have established beyond all question, *a fixed principle* which demonstrates the necessity of progress towards perfection by the evolution of natural law.

Nor is it reasonable to believe that God would have given to man these duties to perform without enabling him to become perfect in the means of accomplishing them, and in overcoming all obstacles and hindrances which made written law a necessity.

We may also be assured that Christ would not have requested us to become perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect, were it not possible for us, as it was for himself to become so; and further, it stands to reason that we would have no evidence by which the perfection of Christ could be judged, were we incapable of realizing a like perfection in our own natures.

Furthermore, since we have no authority for believing that either in His original design of creation or by revelation, does God require anything from men, as conferring a benefit on Himself for His own sake; that this perfection is absolutely without merit or virtue except in its

relation to acts of righteousness towards all God's creatures and cannot be regarded as having any blessedness, sanctity or Divine approval if in any degree conceived in selfishness, it follows that no man can reach this perfection by the mere asking, or by any profession of belief, or by any supernatural means, but only by the strictest observance of all natural laws in obedience to God's Will.

Although, too, it is apparent that the chief obstacles or hindrances to man's carrying out the object of life, come from man himself, and were it not so, there would be no necessity for written or revealed laws; yet, there is no reason why man should continue to be controlled and governed by these laws any more than he should always be in a physical condition requiring medicine or medical treatment to relieve or remove the pains and diseases to which the body is subject by the infraction of physical or organic law. In the latter case he ought to become his own physician, and in the former he ought to become a law unto himself.

It may not appear so strange to most of our readers as it does to us, that in order to qualify men to teach the simple doctrine of Christ as ministers of the gospel they have to undergo years of study at college and be specially ordained for the purpose. The reason may be that the authorities of the several churches desire to create an impression—a foolish one, of course—that unless a man has received a certified qualification he has not the ability, much less the authority to propound any new theory which is likely to disturb orthodox belief. This may explain why the study of scientific works like those of Herbert Spencer receive no encouragement from the clergy.

So far, however, as the doctrine of progress towards perfection is concerned, we are able to shew that without

relying on "saving grace," or any religious or supernatural agency, the late Bishop Butler arrived at the same conclusion as did our late scientific friend, Herbert Spencer.

Butler's argument, taken from *The Analogy*, is as follows:

"We find ourselves, in particular, endued with capacities, not only of perceiving ideas, and of knowledge, or perceiving truth, but also of storing up our ideas and knowledge by memory. We are capable not only of acting, and having different momentary expressions made upon us, but of getting a new facility in any kind of action, and of settled alterations in our temper or character. The power of the two last is the power of habits. That apprehension, reason, memory, which are the capacities of acquiring knowledge are greatly improved by exercise. Habits belong either to the body or the mind. Under the former are comprehended all bodily activities or motions; under the latter, general habits of life and conduct. As habits belonging to the body are produced by external acts, so habits of the mind are produced by the exertion of inward practical purposes, *i. e.*, by acting upon them—the principles of obedience, of veracity, justice and charity. That it is only when these inward principles are exerted, and not by any external course of action are those habits formed. That habits of attention, industry, self-government, are in the same manner acquired by exercise; and habits of envy and revenge by indulgence, whether in outward act, or in thought and intention. Resolutions, also, to do well, are properly acts; and endeavoring to force upon our minds a practical sense of virtue, or to beget in others that practical sense, is a virtuous act. That all these contribute towards forming good habits.

That although going over the theory of virtue in one's thoughts, talking well, and drawing fine pictures of it, may harden the mind in a contrary course, and render it gradually more insensible to moral considerations; as practical habits are formed and strengthened by repeated acts, and passive impressions grow weaker by being repeated upon us, it must follow that active habits may be gradually forming and strengthening, by a course of acting upon such and such motives and excitements, whilst these motives and excitements themselves are, by proportionable degrees, growing less sensible even as the active habits strengthen.

That by accustoming ourselves to any course of action, we get an aptness to go on, a faculty, readiness and often pleasure in it. The inclinations which render us averse to it grow weaker; the difficulties in it, imaginary and real, lessen; the reasons for it offer themselves to our thoughts upon all occasions, and the least glimpse of them is sufficient to make us go on in a course of action to which we have been accustomed.

That practical principles appear to grow stronger absolutely in themselves by exercise, as well as relatively with regard to contrary principles; which by being accustomed to submit, do so habitually, and of course. And thus a new character may be formed, and many habitudes of life which nature directs us to acquire.

*Indeed, we may be assured that we should never have had these capacities of improving by experience, acquired knowledge and habits, had they not been necessary and intended to be made use of.*

"Upon the whole there is a kind of moral government implied in God's natural government. The notion of a moral scheme of government is not fictitious, but natural,

for it is suggested to our thoughts by the constitution and course of nature, * * * and there arises a real presumption that the moral scheme of government established in nature shall be carried on much farther towards perfection hereafter, *and I think a presumption that it will be absolutely completed.*

"Our whole nature leads us to ascribe all moral perfection to God, and to deny all imperfection to Him. And this will for ever be a practical proof of His moral character, to such as will consider what a practical proof is, because it is the voice of God speaking in us. And from hence we conclude that virtue must be the happiness, and vice the misery of every creature, and that regularity, and order, and right, cannot but prevail finally in a universe under His government."—Butler.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

*Religious superstition, dogmas and creeds the enemy of Sciense—Duty of the Church and Ecclesiastics—Unreliability of the New Testament writings—How doctrines should be tested—God's will and the duties of life as expounded by others.*

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"Every plant that my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."—Matt. xv. 13.

"Fall, fall, ye mighty temples to the ground:
Not in your sculptured rise
Is the real exercise
Of human nature's brightest power found.
'Tis in the lofty hope, the daily toil,
'Tis in the gifted line,
In each far thought divine,
That brings down heaven to light our common soil.
'Tis in the great, the lovely and the true;
'Tis in the generous thought,
Of all that man has wrought,
Of all that yet remains for man to do."

[LETITIA E. LANDON.]

It is now nearly three hundred years since Francis Bacon, then Lord Chancellor of England, gave to the world his famous work entitled, "Novum Organum," in which he was sufficiently bold, considering the then existing power of the church, to place so much importance on the study and interpretation of nature, and to assert that

"men had misplaced the end and goal of the Sciences," and, "that Natural Philosophy has in all ages found a troublesome and difficult enemy in superstition, and a blind and immoderate zeal about religion." This same old enemy, however, is still very active in opposing the advancement of science and the progress of humanity. It is nearly as true now, as when Bacon wrote, "that, owing to the want of skill of certain Theologians, the approach to any philosophy, however corrected, is almost closed. Some indeed, in their simplicity, are half afraid lest perchance too deep an enquiry into Nature should penetrate beyond the permitted depths of sobriety; falsely transferring and wresting what is spoken in Holy Scripture of Divine Mysteries against those who pry into the Divine secrets, to the hidden things of nature, which are prohibited by no such law. Others, with greater cunning, consider and reflect that if intermediate causes be unknown, each occurrence can be more easily referred to the Divine hand and rod (which they consider to be of great importance in religion), which is nothing else but seeking to "gratify God by a lie." Others fear, from what has already happened that the movements and changes of philosophy may end by assaulting religion. Others again seem anxious lest anything should be discovered during the investigation of Nature which may subvert religion (especially among the unlearned) or at least shake its authority."

It is manifest, therefore, that before that action "which is the end and destiny of man" can be exercised in accomplishing the purpose of life, man must be freed from the fetters of superstition, ignorance and religious dogmas, especially the belief in supposed miraculous manifestations of God's Will as the result of religious faith and

sacrifices, and the selfish doctrine of redemption from the effect of sin by vicarious sacrifice, acts of confession and faith. Nor will it be well for those professing to be teachers of God's Will, to ignore or pooh-pooh the growing opposition to orthodoxy, and the steady advance of mankind towards religious emancipation. Should the pulpit decline "the call," the press will take up the good work, for of a certainty the people are anxiously looking for a change; they are aroused; are making better use of their intellectual faculties, and the search light and notes of interrogation after truth are becoming brighter and larger every day. But there is some hope that even the clergy of the Church of England will continue to be Protestants in fact as well as in name, for have not a large number of them lately issued a manifesto asking authoritative permission to prove or disprove the story of the New Testament? And why? Because they have read and thought about what the most intellectual and honest minds of the last century have written, such men as Thomas Carlyle and Doctor Martineau, whose only object was to arrive at Truth. Because they see everywhere evidences of decadence in the influence of the church as an organized institution, and recognize the growing influence of external thought. They are beginning to perceive that the church is no longer the sole authority as to "what God doth require of man." As the sage of Chelsea hath said, "But to the church itself, as I hinted already, all is changed, in its preaching, in its working by the introduction of books. The church is the working recognized union of our priests or prophets, of those who by wise teaching guide the souls of men. While there was no writing, ever while there was no easy writing or printing, the preaching of the voice was he

material sole method of performing this. But now with books! He that can write a true book to persuade England, is not he the Bishop and Archbishop, the Primate of England, and of all England? I many a time say, the writers of newspapers, pamphlets, poems, books, these are the real working effective church of a modern country."

Moreover, it is not only the clergymen in their study of the history of the church and of Christendom who have discovered that there exists a gross error in belief somewhere, or why so much scepticism? As Professor Clifford says, "The apparent destructive tendency of modern times, which arouses fear, and the forebodings of evil in the minds of many of the best of men, seems to me to be not mainly an intellectual movement. It has its intellectual side, but that side is the least important, and touches comparatively few souls. The true cause of it is a firm resolve of men to know the right at first hand, which has grown out of the strong impulse given to the moral sense by political freedom. Such a resolve is a necessary condition to the existence of a pure and noble theism, which learns what God is like by His works, and by thinking of man's love for man. Such a doctrine has been taught for ages by good men, and, what is far more important, by example; yet it will seem to many a decline of religious belief. For, assuredly, if men learn the nature of God from the moral sense of man, they cannot go on believing the doctrines of popular theology. Such a change of belief is of small account in itself for any consequence it can bring about, but it is of vast importance as a symptom of the increasing power and clearness of the sense of duty. Men need fear no evil consequences from this desire for a "real belief, founded on the knowledge of God's works and obedience to His

laws—from a desire to please Him by their conduct, and to satisfy their intelligence by so doing." Besides, if it should on investigation be found to be true, as the higher critics agree, that "there is no original book of the New Testament extant; that such copies of the books as we have are in different languages, of different dates, and vary to the extent of some thousands of different readings; that it was a common practice of the early Christians to edit and alter texts to suit their particular tenets, and even to put forward entire books as apostolic; and that these spurious books and amended texts were so intermixed with genuine books and pure texts as to have baffled the best early scholars as to which were true and which false," are these clergymen not justified in questioning "evidence such as this on which we are commanded to believe that we have the *ipsissimis verbis* of Jesus, the indisputable facts of his life, including the stupendous miracles of a virgin birth, and a bodily resurrection and ascension, and this too despite the testimony of comparative religion, that every ancient religious hero was surrounded by a halo of myth especially as to his birth and death?" Why, even Paul and Barnabus had some difficulty in restraining the people of Lystra from Deifying them, because Paul "healed a cripple" at that place. Nor did Paul, which is important to note, claim to be acting under any supernatural agency in what he did, but bore testimony of the Living God, through the works of His creation. (Acts xiv.)

The government of the universe, however, will not change; there never has been any change in its executive functions since the All-Disposing Will of God first was manifested to man.

It is the thought and knowledge of man concerning the

scheme and government of the Universe, and the scheme and object of the Scriptures that must and will change.

Once men begin to comprehend the almighty plan, sublime, grand, perfect and complete with harmony in all its parts; see in God the Great Workmaster and their Paternal Governor; understand His Will, and the task He has appointed them to perform; perceive how this task is designed to promote the best results as regards their pleasure and happiness; and that the irrevocable and unchangeable laws to which men must submit, are arranged for the benefit of mankind, capable of leading them onward in the path of righteousness towards perfection, and upwards to the throne of God, it will not take long for man to free himself from the fetters of religious superstitions, dogmas, doctrines and creeds, especially if he believe in the teaching of Christ. Let the use or uselessness of all such be tested by the result of this enquiry—are they, or the belief in them founded on selfish motives, and unlikely to accomplish any material benefit to mankind? because, if none of them will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty, render hospitality to the stranger, comfort the sick, pity the criminal, silence the liar and slanderer, or appeal with conviction to the inner conscience, "that right is right, and to follow right were wisdom in the scorn of consequence," then you may depend upon it, that all such doctrines and creeds, beginning and ending in profession and belief, form no part of righteousness or pure religion, and will of themselves enable no man or woman to qualify for a seat in God's Heavenly Kingdom.

"God is Love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."—I. John iv. 16.

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."—I. John iv. 11.

"He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?—I John iv. 20.

No doubt will rack, nor fear disturb the mind
Of him who lives to benefit mankind.
'Tis not a part of the Eternal plan,
That man love God more than his fellowman.
In spite of creeds and doctrines, there is naught
That God e'er said, revealed, or taught,
Stands out more clearly, or so well defined,
As this great truth impressed on all mankind,—
The tie that binds each one with God above,
Is the pure religion of unselfish love.
If then God so loves us, it can't be true
That we love God and not our brother too.
To whom the Father loves, no one should dare
Deny that love which he expects to share.
Who withholds then from his fellow being,
What his creator hath so freely given,
No matter what his creed or faith may be,
His love for God is mere hypocrisy.

"Once men grasp the right idea, we should have a different world; men's acts will be the outcome of a real living faith and belief, and their lives be as simple and earnest as they are now the opposite. Now all is profession; then they would act from the conviction which a truth beheld must carry with itself; their difficulty and confusion would begin to clear away, once they set out on the right path; their consciousness of life would be very different; they would perceive all the loveliness there is about them, and experience a great delight therein; their power of understanding things, and of steering their bark through the waves of life would be very different, filled with hope and courage, love to their kind, and an infinite power of forgiveness, and sympathy with all

whilst the process of rectification was in progress. This enlightenment and redemption would give a heart of life, opening out to all men a heaven, in this world within and beyond us, and delivering us from all that now is so despicable and unlovely. This is no dream, but may be sober reality; once get mankind to cherish hopes of a glorious conscience being of the latent powers within himself that, properly developed, will make man a superior and better being than the imagination of the most daring has ever conceived, the glory of acting in absolute harmony and unity with the creator, and therefore with his neighbor."—James Platt.

"God's wisdom and power are strikingly conspicuous when we discover a system apparently complicated to be, in fact, simple, clear, beautiful and beneficent; and when we behold His rational creatures comprehending His will, acting in harmony with it, reaping all the enjoyments which His goodness intended for them, and ascending in the scale of being by the cultivation and improvement of their nobler powers, the glory of God appears surprisingly great.

"We do not promote the glory of God by singing His praises, by offering up prayers to His throne, and by performing other devotional exercises, if, at the same time, we shut our eyes to His natural institutions, neglect His physical, organic and moral laws, and act in direct contradiction to His plan of government, presenting ourselves before Him as spectacles of pain and misfortune, suffering the punishment of our infringements of His institutions, and ascribing these lamentable consequences of our own ignorance and folly to inherent imperfections in the world which He has made. It is only by presenting before the Creator our bodies in as complete a condi-

tion of health and vigor, our minds as thoroughly disciplined to virtue and holiness, and as replete with knowledge, and, in consequence our whole being as full of enjoyment as our constitution will admit, that we can really shew forth His goodness and glory.

"If I am sound in the view which I have labored to establish, that this world really constitutes a great theatre of causation, adapted to the animal, moral and intellectual nature of man, so arranged as to admit of his becoming prosperous and happy in proportion as he becomes thoroughly intelligent and moral, and by no other means: what a fertile field of precept for the practice of virtue is thus opened up to us!

"How eloquent, how forcible, how varied, and how instructive, may not the teachers of God's law and God's will then become, when they shall have the whole book of creation opened to them for texts; when every line shall be clear, interesting and instructive; and when they shall be able to demonstrate, in the consequences which attend the fulfilment or neglect of their precepts, that they are teaching no vain or fanciful theories but the true wisdom of God!

"Conceive for one moment how much of useful, interesting, nay, captivating instruction might be delivered to a general audience by merely expounding the functions, uses and abuses of the various organs of the body necessary to health, and of the faculties of the mind, holding up the constitution of each as a Divine intimation to man, and the consequences of using or abusing each as solemn precepts from the Divinity addressed to his understanding and his moral and religious feelings.

"Nothing appears to be more preposterous than for human beings to pray evening and morning to their

maker, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,' and all the while to close their eyes against perception of the means appointed by God for realizing His kingdom and doing His will on earth!

"We should endeavor to discover the qualities, agencies and relations of natural objects, existing and acting under divinely imposed laws, which we call the laws of nature. As we cannot alter the qualities, suspend their action, or prevent the consequences which have been attached to it, our chief duty in respect to them will be to investigate them, and to discover everything that can be known regarding them. This is the aim of scientific enquiry as now conducted, and the elucidation of the qualities and agencies of natural objects should continue to be pursued on scientific principles, not only for the benefit which their knowledge and practical application give to mankind, but because it is God's will that we do so.

"If we view the subject of life, health, happiness, etc., free of prejudice, common sense tells us unmistakably that disease, destitution and the many ills which flesh is heir to, have been caused by the follies of our ancestors or of our own, and there should be no doubt in the mind of any rational being, 'that what man has caused man can cure.' The only way to grasp this subject thoroughly is to take the illnesses or miseries we suffer from, one by one, and ask ourselves if there be any one which *must* or *need* have been, which in its inception might not have been avoided, which in fact, is not distinctly traceable to our infringing, through ignorance or wilfulness, the laws of nature, which lie plain, discoverable before us; the *physical laws*, on which health depends; the *moral laws*, on which happiness depends; and the *social* and *economic* laws, on which plenty and comfort depend.

"If we know the structure, functions, and laws of health, of the digestive and respiratory organs, we shall perceive that temperance, cleanliness, exercise, the breathing of pure air, and other observances, are prescribed to us by a command that is absolute in authority, that of God himself, and by a discipline that is irresistible. On the one hand we have health, enjoyment, efficiency, abundance and length of days as the rewards of observance; and on the other disease, pain, incapacity, mental misery, physical destitution and premature death as the consequences of disobedience."—George Combe.

"You cannot improve dwellings without lessening intemperance and vice; you cannot diminish drunkenness without diminishing pauperism and brutality; you cannot improve sanitation, or diffuse knowledge of hygiene, without checking disease and lengthening life. With more comfortable homes, greater sobriety, and better health, you give a stimulus to education and a higher moral tone."

Now it is a well known fact that the average duration of life at the present time shews a marked increase over that of half a century ago, owing to the advance of science and man's better appreciation and observance of natural laws. Yet, as Dr. Schofield says, "Eight people out of nine die too soon by breaking, through ignorance, carelessness or wilful neglect, one or other of the five laws that form the entire code of health, *i. e.*, that food shall be wholesome, air pure, clothing sufficient, cleanliness practised, and exercise and rest used when needed.

"It is computed that, apart from disease, the ordinary span of life is five times that of growth; and fixing this

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* See "The Maintenance of Health," by Dr. Alfred Schofield, M.D. Hodder & Stoughton.

latter at 21 years in the human race, men should die between 100 to 105 years.

"It is unspeakably sad to think that some 200,000 die needlessly and prematurely every year in this country (Britain) from these wretched and preventable causes, and that some seven million are needlessly ill."

## CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS—CONTINUED.

*What the clergy should teach to promote the true object of life—The Day of Rest—Prayer—Conversion—Doctrine of salvation and Eternal Life, considered.*

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"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the House of God."—I. Peter iv. 17.

We think the clergy and ministers of all denominations will be candid enough to admit that, although not the result of direct teaching, the many religious manifestations attending mankind from the cradle to the grave, have had the effect of causing it to be generally believed that the chief object of life is to be religious. Instead, therefore, of preaching and raising contentious arguments over religious doctrines, dogmas and creeds, the clergy should make it their first duty to discover and establish, if they can, some *a priori* principle as a basis for such belief, or otherwise stand up boldly and tell the people what the true object of life really is, and help them to judge as to the necessity or uselessness of all such manifestations, doctrines, dogmas and creeds by the test as to their practical application to such object. If they will do this we can easily foresee the result. Science will be the goal, and righteousness the religion of man; work will be the means of his salvation, and "The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" will be the creed of the churches. You will be told that the much-respected divine, Norman McLeod, was wrong in saying:

> "No less a christian is he, who heaven bound,
> Hath spurned the earth beneath his feet."

You will be taught to sing:

> Oh, for a thousand eyes to see
> God's wondrous works and ways.

instead of

> "Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
> My great Redeemer's praise."

You will be taught that God should be glorified in the manifestations of science instead of in those of religion.

You will be taught that if you would become the ruler of even one city, you must properly employ your talents (faculties) and not bury them.

You will be told that it will be useless to offer as an excuse for ignorance, idleness, and general indifference to the results of honest labor, that you have observed the rules of the school or workshop, obeyed the ordinances of your city or country, or enrolled yourself as a member of some church.

You will not, as heretofore, be introduced to the Maker of the Universe as one would be introduced to the patentee of a new machine, and be expected to have respect, much less of admiration and love for the Inventor, without first being instructed as to its use, ingenuity of design, and the skilful workmanship in its construction.

You will be taught that the greater your confidences (begotten of knowledge) in your Heavenly Father, His Works and Ways, the less you will rely on religious faith founded on ignorance.

You will be taught "that self-help should be encour-

aged more than alms giving, and that an ambitious attempt to rise above one's surroundings is far preferable to a spiritual resignation to the Will of Providence."

The clergy "will not degrade mankind by telling them that they are born in sin, and can only be saved by some supernatural agency, but instead will stimulate their self-respect by setting before them the examples of noble lives in all ages, and inciting them to go and do likewise."

"They will not tell men to endure life and bear patiently and resignedly the 'ills that flesh is heir to,' but instead will become the leaders in explaining that these are due to their own misuse or abuse of the powers within them, and shew them how to remedy the same."

They will first teach the true object of the Scriptures before expounding them, and at the same time explain to men that "the word of God is not bound."

They will teach men that any building used as a church is not the "House of God," in the sense that He is not to be met with elsewhere; but rather that "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands"; is not pleased with lip worship, and does not approve either of public or long prayers.

They will teach you that no one day, or Sunday, is exclusively the Lord's day, but rather that "He esteemeth every day alike."

They will teach you the true meaning of the "Sabbath of rest"—that it is a day instituted and set apart from others for the benefit of man, and not of God—a day on which men should of necessity rest from their labors and render their exhausted energies more fitted to resume their work; because, without work man cannot do the Will of God and accomplish the object of life, and to be able to work men must also be able to rest, and therefore

any obstacle placed in the way of man enjoying this necessary day of rest is a direct violation of God's Will.

They will endeavor to make this day one of anticipated pleasure to all mankind—a day when, owing to the united efforts of themselves and other men of culture and scientific learning, all classes can meet together and become instructed in the true object of life, and the ways of God, and be made to feel what a glorious heritage and trust God conferred on man when he endowed him with life and faculties capable of subduing this earth and having dominion over all living things thereon.

They will teach men that it will be hopeless to expect good results by assuming an appearance of righteousness or sanctity on Sunday when they are indifferent as to their actions on all other days, and it will please rather than offend them if as a result of their teaching and example men should in their closer walk with God nd Nature be able to exclaim with an English poet:

"My heart's religion is an earnest love
Of all that's good and beautiful and true:
My noblest temple is this sky above—
This vast pavillion of unclouded blue;
These mountains are my altars, which subdue
My wildest passions in their wildest hours;
My hymn is ever many voiced and new—
From bird and bee, from wind and wave it pours;
My incense in the breath of herbs, leaves, fruits and flowers.

"Here health and piety, twin angels, shed
The healiug influence of their hallow'd wings;
Here joyous freedom hovers round my head,
And young hope whispers of immortal things;
Here lavish music, dainty ariel flings
Mellifluous melody on every hand;
Here mild and many featured beauty brings
Dim visions of that undiscovered land
Where the unshackled soul shall boundlessly expand.

"Man canuot stand beneath a loftier dome
Than this cerulean cauopy of light—
The Eternal's vast, immeasurable home,
Lovely by day and wonderful by night!
Than this enameled floor, so greenly bright
A richer pavement man hath never trod;
He cannot gaze upon a lovelier sight
Than fleeting cloud, fresh wave and fruitful sod—
Leaves of that boundless book, writ by the hand of God."

[J. C. PRINCE.]

or unite with the spirit of old Erin's bard in chanting

"The turf shall be my fragrant shrine;
My temple, Lord! that arch of thine;
My censer's breath the mountain airs,
And silent thoughts my only prayers.

"My choir shall be the moonlight waves,
When murmuring homeward to their caves,
Or, when the stillness of the sea,
E'en more than music, breathes of Thee!

"I'll seek by day some glade unknown,
All light and silence like Thy Throne!
And the pale stars, shall be at night,
The only eyes that watch my rite.

"Thy heaven, on which 'tis bliss to look,
Shall be my pure and shining book,
Where I shall read in words of flame,
The glories of thy wondrous name.

"I'll read thy anger in the rack
That clouds awhile the day-beam's track;
Thy mercy in the azure hue
Of sunny brightness breaking through!

"There's nothing bright, above, below,
From flowers that bloom, to stars that glow,
But in its light, my soul can see
Some feature of thy deity.

"There's nothing dark, below, above,
But in its gloom I trace Thy love,
And meekly wait that moment, when
Thy touch shall turn all bright again."

[THOMAS MOORE.]

And then, in the words of Scotland's famous bard, realize that

"Compared with this, how poor religion's pride,
In all its pomp of method and art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotions every grace except the heart."

[BURNS.]

"Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day:
The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
The morning air, pure from the city's smoke;
While, wandering slowly up the river's side,
He meditates on Him, whose power he marks
In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
Around its roots; and while he thus surveys
With elevated joy, each rural charm,
He hopes, yet fears presumption in the hope,
That heaven may be one sabbath without end."

[JAMES GRAHAME.]

"Divines must become acquainted with the real constitution of the world and the moral plan which pervades it; and when they shall have dedicated their talents to teaching these to the people, they will find themselves and their instructions invested with a moral power and efficacy to which they have hitherto been strangers; and then, and not till then, will religion, science, philosophy, practical business and recreation appear resting on one basis, animated by accordant spirits, coinciding in their objects,

and contributing to one end—the improvement in man as a moral and intellectual being."

"Their efforts must be devoted to ascertaining and teaching what God has willed and designed with regard to the life and destiny of man, and that no vain, selfish or indifferent interpretation of natural laws will enable man to avoid performing his duty, or to escape the consequence of neglect or disobedience; let them concentrate their attention and efforts on the very best possible schemes for raising the earthly condition of the suffering masses; let them try to induce men to lead a life here more worthy of their manhood, and let them perceive that in doing this they are taking the most effectual means to make them worthy of the future life. Good actions are alone immortal. What a change we should see in this world if mankind would but resolve to act out the spirit of Longfellow's noble lines:

> "Standing in what too long we bore,
> With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
> We may discern, unseen before,
> A path to higher destinies:
> Nor deem the irrevocable past
> As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
> If rising on its wrecks at last
> To something nobler we attain."

"It is argued that the 'cause and effect idea' must be incorrect, because of the instinct within us that makes us appeal for help in difficulty, and for rescue in peril, to a Being who can hear and answer the creature he has made. The reply is, however, obvious: in trouble and peril we are conscious of our weakness, our inferiority, what insignificant beings we are in comparison to the Creator; and in early times, when the people were ignorant of God's ways,

had no conception of fixed, invariable, unerring law: when the church desired (but failed) to keep men moral by appealing to the wonderful and miraculous, and inspiring men with awe and dread of their Maker, we can easily understand that in any difficulty, the instinct of the weak to appeal for help to the strong would lean to prayer to God as the simplest and readiest way to obtain help, as a child runs to its mother. So the feeble of every age will cling and appeal to the strong. But in those days observant men had not collected the vast multitude of facts as to how Nature's operations are carried on: men had not thought out, and dared not speak out, the inevitable conclusions which observation, reason and reflection led them to. The difficulty must have seemed insurmountable when the clergy had such immense power, when persecution and intolerance were the rule, How few men dare now express this doubt of the efficacy of prayer, yet if they spoke out honestly, men must see the uselessness of prayer for rain, good harvests, freedom from contagious diseases, from loss by shipwreck, for success to our arms in war, etc., when every day adds to our knowledge and strengthens our belief in the reign of law and proves to us that God cannot be worked upon by our appeals, however earnest, fervent and sincere they may be; that, no matter how universal the prayer, how much needed by mankind the request, no prayers of collective humanity can weigh one iota of a grain in the scale of His eternal purposes."—(Platt.) Nor will it excuse the weakness of men in this respect to admit the Will of God after the event as in the case of President Garfield's death after a national prayer for his life, for why should men try to intercept that will by questioning the superior wisdom of God?

There are many professing Christians who still believe in the efficacy of prayer for rain. Let us see, however, what deductions can be found in the whirlpool of this uncertain doctrine. Men pray to God specially for rain. If, as a consequence, rain should come, then it follows, either that God does not "know our necessities before we ask," and that we are not "ignorant in asking," or, that He purposely withheld from men something for their good. If, knowing our necessities, God withholds it until asked for, then rain is dependent altogether upon the prayer of man. If, notwithstanding our necessities and prayers, rain comes not, then it is either because God cannot or will not satisfy man's request. Now, no proof can be given that rain ever fell in answer to man's invocation, and there is abundant evidence that prayers offered in that behalf have been of no avail. Would it not be better then for mankind to be taught that the production of rain is controlled by natural laws rather than encourage a habit wherein the probable deception to them will cause more of doubt than faith in the Almighty?

"What's in prayer but this twofold force,—
To be forestalled e'er we come to fall, and pardon'd being down."
[SHAKESPEARE.]

"To succeed, to be happy, to be free of any ill that afflicts humanity, there is but one remedy: find out the cause, obey the law you have disobeyed, and naturally and inevitably by the operation of the Creator's laws success will take the place of failure, happiness will supercede misery, health will conquer disease. Pray, yes, by all means for a true humility of spirit, feeling your deficiencies, but with the spirit of being resolved to use wisely and well the power inherent within you." Pray daily, for

it will bring you into closer touch and communion with the holy spirit, which is ever striving to blend the divine nature with the human, if man will but give it a welcome place in his heart. Pray for a right understanding, that you may live so as to please God, for knowledge begets confidence both in God and ourselves, and a little confidence will soon enable you to dispense with a great deal of faith.

"Pray in a spirit of thankfulness, that you at last recognize the wisdom of the punishment, and purpose hereafter to walk hand in hand with God in a real earnest spirit, to worship Him by a reverential and willing obedience to His wishes. Think of it, discuss it, pull this idea to pieces as you will, the more you do so the more you will be convinced this is the way to become righteous, striving to learn God's wishes and resolving to obey the same, having such implicit confidence in the wisdom, justice and goodness of the Creator that your mind will recoil with horror from the idea which logically puts the blame of all men's miseries on God's shoulders, by asking Him to interfere and avert the consequences of our own stupidity, sluggishness and knavery."—Platt.

Some people have remarkable faith in the "wonderful conversions," which they claim to have resulted from what are termed "Religious Revivals." No permanent good has ever been done by the "too zealous," and often ignorant promoters of such movements, or by any movement that had not for its object the "turning of man's thoughts inwardly to his own defects," shewing him why he has suffered, and explaining to him how he may in future lead a purer and better life. Mere expression of belief in any person or theological system, or observing its rites and ceremonies, has never done this. When

good has been done it has been by rousing the latent power of good qualities inherent in men, and so stimulating these into activity, that the lower qualities hold thereafter the subordinate position Nature intended them. There has been no conversion, no new being created: the soil must be there and be cultivated and prepared 'ere the seed will take hold and produce fruit.—Platt.

Moreover, is it not the music and singing (of secular creation and forming not the least important factor in the modern evangelist's ritual) which in the greater degree awakens and influences the spiritual emotion and enthusiasm displayed at "religious revivals?" As regards, too, the ordinary services of any church, would they not be dull and unattractive to the majority of worshippers were it not for the musical and choral services employed?

What the people really need is revivals in righteousness, not religious revivals. They require to be taught what religion really is, and as they come to understand they will find that a little righteousness will enable them to dispense with a great deal of religion.

It is simply inconceivable, except on one hypothesis, how men can desire all the blessings they believe the Almighty can bestow on them in this world or the next, and ignore the good results promised to those who live righteously, of which the Scriptures abound, and are amply verified in the lives of men therein recorded; for these blessings, present and future, cannot be excelled by any they can possibly hope for through any religious belief—and this hypothesis is that men are moved by inherent selfishness to expect to reap where they have not sowed, to garner where they have not threshed, and to get credit for another's good qualifications without earning or possessing them. In their heart of hearts they know

that they should work and profit by the talents given to them by their Lord, but always fearful of losing what they have, whilst slothful and negligent in doing their Master's will, they bury their talents in the earth, producing them only as a manifestation of their faith in him, and as a means of escape from their Master's wrath.

"There is," said Doctor Lloyd Jones in a recent sermon, "no damnation more deplorable than the imbecility of the parasites who are willing to eat unearned bread, to shelter themselves in another's strength, to clothe themselves with the purity of another's soul, either in time or eternity. The whole scheme of vicarious atonement, a supernatural saviour, a miraculous salvation, a cramped heaven, an ample hell, belongs to the credulity of ignorance; it is of itself a mark of the unsaved, the evidence of damnation that obtains now, the damnation of one who sets conventions and tradition against science and history and the ever-expanding vision of the wise."

"Nature must be held as symbolic of the Divine, and religious teachers must use God's Works as the means to stimulate men to live their lives in accordance with the highest aspirations. To demonstrate to mankind they are punished or rewarded for their acts in this world, would be using a much surer magnet than 'the future life' has ever been, or can be; for with such teaching 'practice must go with precept.' In the contemplation of Nature and Nature's laws the soul, from necessity becomes more and more possessed by the Spirit of Him who arranges and controls all nature; so the higher thoughts, from a study of nature, lead to loftier hope and higher aspiration, and the mind being filled with reverence for that all-permeating Something which can create marble and Phidias, watchmakers and Paley, worships in

spirit and in truth the spirit of the living God; having faith in the Creator's laws—with such a faith men will be found content to live their lives, and when departing, die in peace, if they have lived and died obeying the holy laws of God."—Platt.

"The influence of the church would be great if it were persistently and sagaciously directed towards the improvement of the moral and material condition of humanity, instead of towards the promulgation of an astounding scheme for securing it against eternal torments in a future existence—for universal well-being here, instead of what is called salvation hereafter."

"The necessity of salvation is the discovery of revelation alone. Nature gives no hint of it. It is said that man's wickedness is obvious, that he feels punishment due to him, and that he needs a Saviour to deliver him from it. But would it not have been better to put an end to sin than allow it to go on, and provide a means of escape from its consequences? The miseries in this world induced by sin are an enormous evil, supposing every soul saved at death. Why then not put a stop to iniquity? It is said that faith in Christ, and the aid of the holy spirit will do so, but facts refute this assertion. What is salvation? Deliverance from God's wrath and curse. Punishment is an object of fear, and it is impossible to love a Being whom we fear; so the desire of heaven becomes a mere abstract, undefined aspiration after happiness, cherished by dreamy imaginative minds, and much more allied to selfishness and superstition than to practical holiness and virtue. Every idea that by our religious services we can benefit God, enhance His honor, His glory, or His happiness, is the emanation of pure self esteem, unenlightened by reason and unsubdued by real piety."—Platt.

One would have thought that Christ's exposure of the

principle of selfishness underlying this unworthy desire to obtain eternal life without doing the works of righteousness would have caused the meanest Christian to blush with shame at the very thought of being considered like unto the young man who approached Christ with a "flattering title," requesting to know "what good thing he could do to obtain eternal life." If there was one feature in the character of Jesus more striking than another it was his scorn and contempt for flatterers, hypocrites, and sycophants. One can, therefore, easily picture the scene and the stern and expressive countenance of Christ as the young man approached Him and said "Good Master," etc. Christ perceived at once the selfish motive prompting this question. The very words of the young man betrayed him. He had large possessions. He was not righteous. If he had been his future life would have given him no trouble; or, if he had not been selfish, and was seeking further instruction in righteousness, he would have wanted to know what good thing he could do *for the benefit of his fellow men.* No, what he wished for undoubtedly was a means of escape from punishment. For this he would readily sacrifice a part of his wealth: he would build a chapel, or an altar, or furnish new vestments for the temple—in fact, he would purchase, if possible, a passport for his soul into the Kingdom of Heaven. So he thought, and how many professing Christians have the same foolish notion to-day? But what of Christ? How soon that young man's heart fell before that scornful rebuke, and the severest test his selfishness could be put to, when Christ said to him, "Why callest thou me good, there is none good save God," and told him "to sell all that he had and give it to the poor," because there is no place in Heaven for the selfish man.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS—CONTINUED.

*The Creator's beneficent provisions for rewarding and protecting the righteous.*

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"We must thus think of the just man, that if he fall into poverty or disease, or any other of these seeming evils, all these things work together for good to him, either alive or dead. For the man is never neglected, who exerts himself to the utmost to become just and to practise virtue, so far as it is possible for a man to resemble God."—Plato.

"All things work together for good to those that love God."—Rom. viii. 28.

Before bringing this work to a close we submit for your consideration a few observations relating to that part of the universal scheme not hitherto brought to your attention, viz., the beneficent provisions which God has made for rewarding and protecting those on whom "He has set his love."

It arises from the thought which we feel sure must have frequently occurred to those who trust in God and live righteously, that if God does not in any miraculous way ever interpose to save men from dangers to which they are daily exposed, and which neither knowledge nor vigilance can prevent, how can they be expected with any degree of confidence to persevere in the paths of rectitude, daily striving and fighting against the evils and temptations that beset them. In

other words, they may ask themselves, What is the use of our attempting to execute or hope to see the culmination of any great work we desire to accomplish, although destined for the benefit of mankind, when perhaps we may innocently happen to be where some apparently, and so far as we are concerned, unavoidable unforseen accident or calamity may suddenly cut short our career?

And in connection with this thought and enquiry, there is always the fact confronting us that we are likely to be tempted even as Christ was tempted of the devil, who, in effect, said to Him: "If you believe as it is written, 'He shall give His angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone," cast thyself down from this dangerous height (the pinnacle of the temple) and see if thy belief will save thee from immediate destruction."

Now, apart from the several assurances contained in the Scriptures, that "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; he shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand, but it shall not come nigh him. Because he has made the Lord his habitation, there shall no evil befall him, neither shall any plague come nigh his dwelling. For God shall give His angels charge over him in all his ways, they shall bear him upon their hands lest he dash his foot against a stone. He shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and adder he shall trample under foot. Because God has set his love upon him, therefore will He deliver him, and set him on high. God will answer him

when he calls, and be with him in trouble and will deliver him and honor him. With *long* life will God satisfy him and shew him His salvation"; (See 91st Psalm); there is also some evidence from the very constitution of man wherewith to establish in the minds of the truly righteous a confidence in what may, we think, be properly called providential protection. Indeed the proposition, or call it, if you will, only a theory, of which we now see but faint glimmerings of light, may some day, when the subject receives further investigation by abler men, and experiences are exchanged demonstrate such a bond of union between the divine and the human in the existence of what Tennyson calls the "Nameless," and Pope says is "the God within the mind," as to leave it beyond all doubt. Some thought was evidently given to this subject by ancient writers, for we find that Plutarch expressed his ideas in these words:

"In surprising and startling actions, where the supernatural and the assistance of the Divinity may be required, Homer does not introduce the Supreme Being as taking away the freedom of the will, but merely as influencing it. The Divine power is not represented as causing the resolution, but only thoughts and ideas which naturally lead to the resolution. In this way, the act cannot be called altogether involuntary, since God is the moving cause to the voluntary, and thus gives confidence and good hope. For we must either banish entirely the Supreme Being from all causality and influence over our actions, or what other way is there in which he can assist and co-operate with men? for it is impossible to suppose that he fashions our corporeal organs, or directs the motions of our hands and feet to accomplish what he intends; but it is by suggesting certain motives, and pre-

disposing the mind, that he excites the active powers of the will, or restrains them."

Now, if there is one thing of which we have actual demonstration, it is the fact that in a way unknown to us, but with so much of certainty and regularity that we may claim for it the operation of a natural law,* the mind of man is affected so as to offer a temporary check to the otherwise freedom of his will. Its action is the same, as if a living voice suddenly exclaimed to a person about to commit a wrongful act, "Stop! don't do that!"—creating, as it were, a momentary barrier between the actor and the wrong to be done. So demonstrative and universal is this corrective agency over the thought and actions of men, in all ages, by common consent it has been called "the voice of God."

Furthermore, have not men of pure thoughts and holy lives in all ages felt the indwelling of a holy spirit linking the divine nature with the human, in a manner that is capable of bringing men into a state of perfection in godliness, and enabling them to become in fact, as they were by God said to be fashioned "in His own image?"

Nor, so far as we know, is this interpretation of divine causation ever questioned, although its application to the universal scheme has received but scant consideration.

It is owing to this interpretation and belief that the Unitarians maintain an unrivalled intellectual ascendancy

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* In a recent number of *The Westminster Review*, Mr. A. E. Maddock makes out a daring case for the natural origin of the Moral sense. He argues, in fact, that this "inward monitor," this "mysterious guide" to conduct has been evolved, and that it is not a sense specially planted by Divine intervention, in spite of all that is claimed on this point by the theologian. . . . That those qualities of the conscience which have all along been regarded with a sort of reverential wonder as signifying its mysterious supernatural origin—as a proof of its divine bestowal—*are the very qualities which furnish the clearest indication of the influence of natural law.*—[From Rapid Review of February, 1905.]

over the other sects who endeavor to profit by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. "When I think of him as the son of Joseph and Mary, as in no miraculous way severed from us, and as in no miraculous way, but simply through yielding to the Divine Spirit that moves in all of us, reaching the heights of self sacrifice and holiness, so that he could challenge his foes to convince him of sin; when I think of him as conquering in his manhood all sin, and triumphing in his faith over all the forces of the world, there is then a rush of love and joy in my heart for him as one of us, as the human master of the soul, which has in it, mingled with every other high passion, all the emotion of humanity. And the feeling is utterly distinct from that which I give to the Father; and the deeper it is the more I am capable of loving God. Loving my brother whom I have seen as perfect man, I can love God whom I have not seen ever more and more. Then again, when we hear him claim for himself, and for all his brothers in human nature, union with the Father, and remember how well the phrase (bold as it is) suits with the earliest declaration with regard to man—that he was made in the image of God—we begin to feel, in a new way, the meaning of the doctrine of the Incarnation."—Stafford A. Brooke, L.L.D.

The happy and comforting thought then is this, that if the mind can be acted upon by "the holy spirit of discipline" in restraint of wrong doing to others, it ought to be capable of so acting on the minds of the truly righteous, who trust in God and seek its aid, so as to offer a warning or protection against any personal impending evil, especially as this protection can be given without suspending the operation of any natural law, inasmuch as it operates in a general way on a fixed principle, where

the proper conditions exist, although it is not a compelling power enforcing obedience, but at the most is only suggestive—man's will being still left free to act upon or refuse to be guided by this divine agent.

Notwithstanding, however, that the righteous and perfect man may look with some assurance for this divine protection, he must not arrogate to himself this protection as of right. As Menander said, "It does not become any living man to say, 'This will not happen to me," for this assurance leadeth no further than this, that God can or may, not that He will give it to us. We see as in a glass darkly and cannot fully comprehend the mind or judgment of God in His dealings with men. We should not, therefore, seek to pry into all God's secrets, or determine for ourselves the justness of God's decrees, lest we be reminded of our presumption in the way the angel rebuked Esdras, saying unto him, "Thy heart hath gone too far in the world, and thinkest thou to comprehend the ways of the Most High?" or, lest like Job we be tempted to enter into postulation with heaven and offend the Most High.

If, however, you would be more strongly impressed with the thought which these last preceding observations are intended to inculcate, you cannot do better than study carefully the whole book of Job, for although God rebuked Job for presuming on the strength of his righteousness to question God's judgment, the great lesson to be found therein is that Job was not afflicted in that he was not righteous, but that God blessed his latter end more than the beginning because his confidence in the fruits of righteousness could not be shaken.

We conclude with a quotation from the last chapter of the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation," which

contains the thoughts entertained by the author, Robert Chambers, on this interesting subject.

"It may be that, while we are committed to take our chance in a natural system of undeviating operation, and are left with apparent ruthlessness to endure the consequences of every collision into which we knowingly or unknowingly come with each law of the system, there is a system of Mercy and Grace behind the screen of Nature which is to make up for all casualties endured here, and the very largeness of which is what makes these casualties a matter of indifference to God. For the existence of such a system, the actual constitution of nature is itself an argument. The reasoning may proceed thus: The system of nature assures us that benevolence is a leading principle in the divine mind. But that system is at the same time deficient in means of making this benevolence of invariable operation. To reconcile this to the recognized character of the Deity, it is necessary to suppose that the present system is but a part of a whole, a stage in a Great Progress, and that the Redress is in reserve. Another argument here occurs—the economy of nature, beautifully arranged and vast in its extent as it is, does not satisfy even man's idea of what might be; he feels that, if this multiplicity of theatres for the exemplification of such phenomena as we see on earth were to go on for ever unchanged, it would not be worthy of the Being capable of creating it. An endless monotony of human generations with their humble thinkings and doings, even though liable to a certain improvement, seems an object beneath that august Being. But the mundane economy might be very well as a portion of some greater phenomenon, the rest of which was yet to be evolved. It therefore appears that our system, though it may at first ap-

pear at issue with other doctrines in esteem amongst mankind, tends to come into harmony with them, and even to give them support. I would say, in conclusion, that, even where the two above arguments may fail of effect, there may yet be a faith derived from this view of nature sufficient to sustain us under all sense of the imperfect happiness, the calamities, the woes and pains of this sphere of being. For let us but fully and truly consider what a system is here laid open to view, and we cannot well doubt that we are in the hands of One who is both able and willing to do us the most entire justice. And in this faith we may well rest at ease, even though life should have been to us but a protracted disease, or though every hope we had built on the secular materials within our reach were felt to be melting from our grasp. Thinking of all the contingencies of this world as to be in time melted into or lost in the greater system, to which the present is only subsidiary, let us wait the end with patience and be of good cheer."

> "Enough, if we may wait in calm content,
> The hour that bears us to the silent sod;
> Blameless improve the time that heaven has lent,
> And leave the issue to Thy will, O God."
>
> [W. L. Bowle.]

THE END.

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